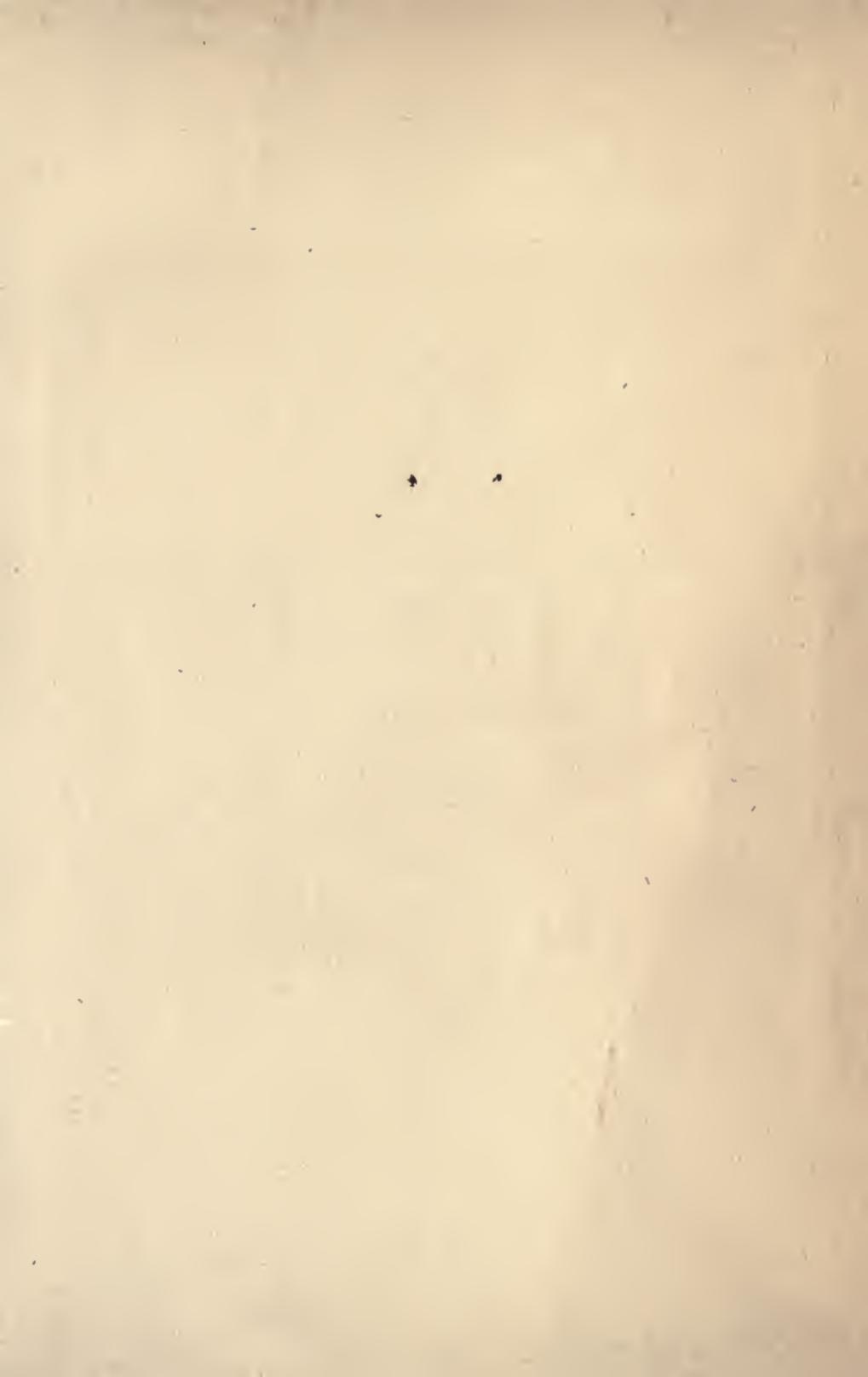


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JOURNAL OF A TOUR IN THE UNITED
STATES, CANADA, AND
MEXICO.

JOURNAL OF A TOUR
IN THE
UNITED STATES, CANADA
AND
MEXICO

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JOURNAL OF A TOUR IN THE UNITED STATES, CANADA, AND MEXICO.

CHAPTER I.

The "Lucania"—Arrival in America—New York—Hudson River—Albany—Saratoga Springs—Lakes George and Champlain—Railway travelling.

LAST autumn,¹ having a little time to spare, and greatly desiring to see "that which licks creation," my brother G. and I suddenly made up our minds to cross the "Herring Pond," for the purpose of seeing, some portion at least, of the vast Continent of America.

So we took our places in the great Cunard Liner "Lucania," and on September 22nd, met at Liverpool, and at 4 p.m. proceeded on board, by tug.

It was a quiet, gray afternoon, and as we neared the great ship it was astonishing to see how small she looked; we had pictured to ourselves something so very much bigger, and could scarcely believe in her 12,950 tons! However, once on board, one began to realize her huge size, and to admire her enormous engines and decks, and the splendour, rather, perhaps, than comfort, of her state saloons. The drawing-room was provided, not only with a

¹ This was written in 1895.

grand pianoforte, but also a fine organ, upon both of which, during the voyage, divers amateurs discoursed sounds sweet, or otherwise. They also sang, and occasionally recited.

My "state-room" was airily situated on the "deck-promenade," with a delightful bath-room just opposite.

These cabins on the "promenade deck" are considered the best, and are all that is nice as long as the weather is fine; but, one rough day, when the Atlantic rollers happened to be splashing in full swing across the entrance to them, I tried in vain to dodge "between waves," and reached the haven drenched! So, unless you *know* that the weather will be calm throughout, and no encroaching waves washing the deck, I think the state-rooms on the saloon-floor preferable, as they are always accessible, whatever the weather. It is true, it is possible to get to the deck-cabins by another way; but it is such a tortuous, hot and roundabout *route*, that, except in the case of being battened down, one hasn't the patience to try it.

We had started, a well-filled shipload, at about 4.30 p.m., with a calm and quiet run to Queenstown, where we arrived on Sunday morning, staying just long enough to take in mails and passengers, after which, in perfectly quiet and sunshiny weather, we left the harbour with its bright green hills, and steamed out more and more rapidly, into the wide ocean.

Soon all land was left behind; and on we rushed, entirely alone on the pathless sea. So smoothly does the great ship move, that it is not till night sets in, and you pace up and down watching the gleam of the electric light on the swirling, madding water, that you realize, with a sensation of awe, the wild pace through the waves at which you are rushing, on and on, into the darkness.

In the daytime, you recline dreaming and reading on your *chaise-longue*, and only feel the beauty and boundless rest of the glittering, sunlit sea. Once or twice it curled up with displeasure ; and one day our foghorn blew fearful blasts unceasingly ; but on the whole the voyage was delightful and passed like a dream, out of which, at 7. p.m. on Friday 28th, we awoke to find ourselves at New York.

No tug *this* side the Pond, but straight to the landing-stage, and into the custom-house, where our boxes somehow having got mixed, we were kept hours and hours ; but when at last found there was no trouble at all, and without even looking into them the amiable officials, on our simple declaration of "nothing to declare," chalked them, and we passed out with them safely to the "Broadway Hotel," to which we had been advised to go, as being in the centre of all the traffic of cars and elevated railways —which would facilitate the hasty scamper we proposed making over New York, before starting north-eastward.

One thing had surprised me before leaving the ship. I had expected to see, instantly on arrival, troops of "Interviewers," prowling in search of "strangers," to inquire their "opinion of America," before they had landed.

None such appeared, rather to my disappointment, for one likes to see the "Institutions" of a country ; but we heard afterwards that several had been waiting, but quite absorbed in trying to secure the first news of a member of the "Four-Hundred" *élite* of New York, who had come over for the facilities of American divorce.

Later on, we had superabundant experience of "Interviewers!"

We found the Broadway quite comfortable, cuisine good, and the waiters attentive, all negro, and rather picturesque ; one of whom, who particularly waited on us, was

a perfect Adonis, "black but beautiful," and always stood, between whiles of serving, in the most elegant and æsthetic of attitudes, smiling sweetly upon us.

The next morning, Saturday 29th, was perfectly lovely and very hot; we devoted it to making a survey of the city from the elevated railway which circles it entirely, and occupies almost every other street—as much to the disfigurement of the town as to the convenience of the passenger, who, seated aloft, in the cool of the air, enjoys a bird's-eye view of the place.

In addition to the elevated railways, every street is crammed with electric-cars and "horse-stages;" there are cabs too, which you see standing in long rows, but nobody ever seems to use them; for not two steps will they go without the payment of $2\frac{1}{2}$ dollars (10 shillings).

Up the famous Fifth Avenue you progress in what is called a "stage," a ramshackle old contrivance, not worthy to be named in the same century with the yet not ideal London 'bus. It is untidy and crowded. When all the sitting room is occupied, people still keep crowding in, one on the top of the other, and standing all along the narrow space between, till you absolutely suffocate and scramble out as best you can, and walk on for perhaps a quarter of an hour before another "stage" comes lumbering by, possibly as crowded as before.

These "stages" show a touching belief in the honesty of the passengers, who each deposit a "dime" (ten cents) in a pocket placed for the purpose—or not, as they please; there being no conductor or anybody to see that they do.

As we proposed to see the museums and picture galleries thoroughly on our return, we only glanced at the outsides of the various buildings, and spent some time arranging at

"Cook's" the details and railway coupons for our proposed travels.

On Sunday we went to the high mass at St. Patrick's Cathedral, which is considered a very fine structure; and it is fine, but it somehow looks, like so much of modern Gothic, as if it had been put into a mould and "turned out" very correctly.

It is, however, by far the most striking and important church in the city, and was crowded, although the music was indifferent.

In the afternoon we went by rail to Brooklyn, and drove over Greenwood cemetery, very fine and well kept, and from which there are extensive views, enhanced that evening by a gorgeous crimson sunset.

We returned by ferry-boat, and next morning, October 1st, started at 9 a.m. in the swift and comfortable river-boat up the Hudson. The weather was perfect; the sun hot, and the sky a cloudless Italian blue, reflecting the loveliest colour into the sparkling river; the trees and shrubs beginning to assume their autumnal reds and golds, picturesque banks and a delicious fresh breeze, as far as Albany, the capital of New York State; where we arrived towards sunset, just in time to fly up the handsome State Street, on the highest point of which commandingly stands the magnificent, new and still unfinished Capitol, in the French renaissance style, the interior of which, from the designs of H. H. Richardson (the architect of most of the finest buildings in the United States) is Cyclopean in bulk and superb in effect. The most gorgeous marbles and onyxes, finely carved huge staircases and marble-arched chambers, which we only had time to run hurriedly through before flying off by train to Saratoga Springs, which we reached at 9 p.m., and left the following morning

at 9.30, after having spent two or three hours walking from spring to spring—one more celebrated for cures than another—tasting the water of each, all very nice and refreshing, and all the streets delightfully shaded by very fine trees.

We continued our way north by steamer, up Lake George (so called after George III.), 33 miles long by about $3\frac{1}{2}$ wide, bordered on both sides by prettily shaped and wooded mountains; the boat winding in the midst of more than 200 lovely little islets, covered with trees and ornamental shrubs and flowery gardens and some little villas, which, on a small scale, comforted us for not having, later on, seen the “Thousand Isles” in the St. Lawrence.

After leaving Lake George and traversing the short space of land between the two, we embarked on a larger steamer, up the much grander and wider Lake Champlain, 120 miles long, with an occasional breadth of 12.

Lovely peeps of the Adirondack and Green Mountains, passing the picturesque ruins of Fort Ticonderoga, notable for the famous exploits of Colonel Allen of Vermont and his “Green Mountain boys,” in 1775 ; and, previously, for many fights during the wars with the French, especially for the unsuccessful attack upon it made by General Abercrombie in 1758, which cost the lives of 2,000 men and of the young and gallant Lord Howe, second in command ; a model to all, and whose loss was a great blow to our forces—but of which we gained final possession a year later.

From Lake Champlain we proceeded by train, and had our first experience of American “sleepers” and cars, vaunted by natives as the “perfection of travelling comfort ;” although all who can afford it take care never to enter them, but have private “cars” of their own, containing dining, drawing, and bedrooms—roomy and com-

fortable, with kitchen-cars attached—the whole forming a little separate train, which is shunted or tacked on to the ordinary cars as required ; so that they travel in their own “ home,” as it were, and know nothing of the discomforts of ordinary travellers.

Never later than 10 p.m., and often earlier, the negro who acts as “ porter ” to the “ sleeper ” puts on his white cotton garments, in which he looks very neat, and comes up to you with the usual grin on his shining face, “ it’s time to fix up for the night ! ” In vain you remonstrate and explain that you cannot possibly go to bed at such a preposterously early hour. He only grins the more and repeats, “ I guess it’s time,” and before you know where you are down comes the upper berth upon your head, and as you would have to sit half doubled up, you are compelled to allow the bed to be made up and the curtains closely drawn ; after which some man or woman mounts up into the berth above you, and others into the ones opposite, with only a narrow gangway between, with the temperature up to any height (*always* kept up, by command of the authorities, to not less than 75° Fahr.). You then pass through a long night of suffocation, not to say asphyxiation. Happy for you if you are able to persuade the porter to open your window.

Luckily, each lower berth has its window ; not so fortunate the unhappy tenant of the upper berth, where there is none.

But often you ask in vain. The other passengers “ scent ” the night air, and call the conductor to insist on its being instantly shut out.

In desperation you fling open a part of your thick curtains, which, as often as he periodically passes through, the porter carefully re-closes.

How one longs for an English first-class compartment, or even second or third! At earliest dawn you fly to be first in the one very tiny apartment in which ladies can make some slight sort of toilette, whilst the men have one to themselves at the other end of the car.

In short, no words can describe the discomfort and suffocating *désagréments* of the “sleepers;” and, to avoid them, we several times preferred to sit up in the crowded long cars, where, at any rate, you can read, the lights not being ruthlessly veiled; or look at the passing scenery, as well as starlight or moonlight will allow. But we found that, although this might be done with some sort of comfort (comparatively) up to midnight—almost invariably, after that hour, two or three of the long cars were dropped at some station, and the whole of their occupants turned into the one or two cars left on the train. Every kind of being comes tumbling in; six or more seat themselves, somehow, where there is only room for four; heathen Chinees, negroes, Yankees of least refined type, who all proceed to smoke, etc. Every window is shut, the atmosphere becomes that of an *inferno*, and in desperation you make a rush to find the conductor, to beg him, “at the eleventh hour,” to find you, after all, a berth in the disagreeable but comparatively preferable “sleeper;” to which he answers reproachfully that he guesses there’s no room there now, but goes to see, usually with the result that a berth is found unoccupied, or some good-natured man gives up his in your favour, and there you take refuge, gasping with heat, for the remainder of the night.

It really is sometimes exasperating to hear the “comfort of American railway travelling” extolled, as if there were nothing comparable to it in the whole civilized world! for, be it understood, there is but *one* “class,” and the

“sleepers ;” so that, either one or the other, you must go in, or you must undertake the very considerable expense of hiring a “car” to yourself.

It is true that on some lines there are “coloured cars,” reserved entirely for the “coloured” travellers; and woe to you if, by mistake, seeing a quite empty one, you establish yourself in it; the outraged black conductor comes to you with an injured and majestic air: “Ma’am, you must just get out of this; this car is for the *coloured* ladies and gentlemen. *White* men and women go *there!*” scornfully pointing to the adjoining car.

In the daytime, when the trains are not crowded, you can make yourself quite happy in the long cars, in which the seats are ordinarily of green or red velvet, and not uncomfortable, and plenty of windows on each side, through which the views are well seen; but nothing can accustom one to the inexcusable and painful want of cleanliness caused by the inordinate use of tobacco, and the repulsiveness of the precautionary measures necessitated thereby.

It is everywhere more or less the same—museums, churches, picture-galleries, all!

It is the great, and one, drawback to travel or residence in America.

In less “advanced” Mexico, on the other hand, there is nothing of the kind.

CHAPTER II.

Canada—Quebec—Montmorenci Falls—Montreal—Ottawa—Rideau Hall—Toronto.

AT 6.30 a.m., on October 3rd, we found ourselves at Quebec, and drove straight to the sumptuous *château* rather than hotel of “Frontenac,” magnificently situated on the top of a perpendicular precipice, the citadel to the right, and the grand St. Lawrence in front, with its further picturesque shore, beyond which again it winds in divers wide channels to the ocean.

We looked down upon the almost perpendicular path up which Wolfe’s twenty-four volunteers silently scrambled during the night of September 12th, 1759, driving off the French guard at the top; whilst the remainder of the English troops stealthily followed in their footsteps, holding on by the scanty bushes till they were all drawn up on the Heights of Abraham, where, next morning, the great battle was fought in which Wolfe was struck down at the moment the French were flying—his last words: “Now, God be praised, I die in peace!” whilst his antagonist, Montcalm, mortally wounded at the same moment, was carried into Quebec rejoicing that he “should not live to see its surrender,” which took place on the 18th, after his death.

It is sad to remember that the very next year saw the defeat of our forces on these same plains of Abraham by

10,000 Frenchmen, followed by the siege of Quebec, saved, happily, from capitulation by the timely arrival of the British fleet.

In the governor's garden stands the monument erected in 1827 to the rival commanders, Wolfe and Montcalm—giving equal honour to both; an equality, however, not altogether deserved by the French General, whose fame had been, two years previously, indelibly tarnished by his non-prevention, if not encouragement, of the savage treachery of his Indian allies, after the British surrender of Fort William-Henry on Lake George—who, notwithstanding his solemn guarantee of life and safe retreat to the garrison (which included great numbers of women and children), were not hindered from falling mercilessly upon the refugees, massacring the greater number, and carrying the remainder into slavery and torture.

The fort had been previously greatly weakened by the withdrawal, by order of Lord Loudoun, at that time General-in-Command, of large numbers of the garrison, for the prosecution of his unsuccessful siege of Louisburg.

To return to the "Frontenac," most comfortable and luxurious, excellent French cuisine, and the waiters all French—as indeed seems to be the whole town.

The grand Citadel, which we were shown over by an amiable and very smart (French) artilleryman, commands superb views; thence to the Houses of Parliament, very fine, inside and out; French is mostly spoken, the greater number of the Ministry as well as of the members, being of that nationality.

It makes one rather wonder what would happen if war should ever unfortunately break out between the two nations!

After an excellent *dîjeuner*, we started in a queer sort

of little half-covered cart, with a capital trotting pony, in lovely sunshine, to see the Montmorency Falls ; but long before we reached them clouds had gathered, and in the midst of a terrific downpour of rain we arrived at the little inn, from which a pretty path through flowery woods leads to the Falls. We started to walk in the drenching rain and deep mud, a short distance to the summit, from which you descend perpendicularly by slippery wooden steps, and are rewarded by a magnificent *coup-d'œil*—a grand sheet of foamy water, plunging from a height of 265 feet, with a width of 150, bordered on each side by cliffs of rugged deep-red rock, their summits crowned with graceful trees brilliant with autumnal gold.

After revelling in the beauty of it as well as the pitiless rain would allow, we made the best of our way back to the little inn, where the French landlady kindly dried our wet things, after which, much regretting the impossibility of attempting the further scramble to the "natural steps" higher up the river, we returned the ten miles' drive to Quebec, where, in defiance of the still pelting rain, we wandered into various churches, all remarkable here for their bright tin-covered roofs and spires, giving much the appearance of silver ; and into several shops, principally of very fine furs and Canadian curiosities.

We likewise drove, the rain slightly abating, beyond the Heights of Abraham, to various parks and villas, all fine and well-kept, with beautiful trees and lovely views of the rivers and distant country.

We dined late at the "Frontenac," and afterwards started by train in the "sleeper" again to Montreal. It was pleasant to remember that Quebec had been once honoured by the presence of our glorious Nelson, then a very young man, on the point of marrying a young Canadian lady, and

retiring from the Navy, which, happily, he was dissuaded from doing.

The weather at Quebec had been fresh, not to say cold, but during the night the rain cleared, and the day broke lovely and hot, with a cloudless sky. At 6.30 a.m. we reached Montreal, and drove straight through fine wide streets charmingly bordered with trees and handsome houses—the beautifully-wooded Mount Royal (from which the city takes its name) towering grandly in the background ; past cathedrals and churches, with their glittering tinned spires, to the fine Hotel Windsor, in the great galleries and dining-hall and “parlours” of which huge Christmas fires were blazing, in spite of the thermometer at 80° !

An excellent breakfast, in stifling heat, after which we sallied forth to see the imposing Court-House and City-Hall, and the principal churches, in one of which a piano did duty for organ ; in another, an “elevator” saved you the fatigue of walking up to the top of one of its great towers ; and a third was labelled all over “Church to let !”

The residences are substantially and handsomely built, each with its pretty garden, rising in terraces towards the lovely Mount Royal Park, through which an excellent road winds up terraces to the summit of the Mount (900 feet), from which the view is one of the most beautiful in the world.

We stood on a raised platform overlooking the loveliest green turf, the entire hill one mass of the most graceful trees gorgeous with every conceivable hue of pure gold and scarlet, delicate rose-pinks, greens and green-golds, looking down upon the descending terraces to the admirably laid-out city, with its great domed cathedral, dominating it as

St. Peter's dominates Rome; spires and towers and tree-fringed streets, all seated on a green island, encircled, as it were, by a silvery snake—the grand St. Lawrence and Ottawa rivers, winding and shining through plains of the vividest verdure, stretching away to the furthest horizon, in which rise faint, distant hills of misty blue—the whole lovely scene bathed in sleepy golden sunshine, sublimely reposeful!

But inexorable Time forced us away, and we made the round of the Mount through the lovely, gorgeously tinted woods back to the city, passing, amongst other pleasant villas, the unpretending red-brick house taken for the winter months by the Viceroy, but not yet occupied.

With great regret we left this charming city, nearly as French as Quebec, and full of every mark of prosperity.

We arrived late the same evening at Ottawa, the capital of Canada, although vastly inferior in almost every respect—except that it is English and not French—to both Quebec and Montreal; and proceeded, for the night, to the principal hotel, “Russell House,” sufficiently good and comfortable, but on a very different scale from the splendid hotels at the two former cities.

It is excellently situated, just opposite the magnificent group of Parliament Houses and other government buildings, all finely massed together on high ground commanding the river Ottawa.

The next morning, which was again fine and warm, we started early on a voyage of discovery through the city, and, it being too early to find the Parliament Houses open, proceeded by tram as far as the entrance to the grounds of Rideau Hall: a very small, unpretentious, and plainly-built house, with no good reception rooms, and altogether, we thought, quite unworthy to be the

chief residence of the representative of the Queen in Canada.

It is surrounded by a small, and not particularly ornamental garden, and woods containing no fine timber. There are pretty vistas, and a skating-pond and toboggan-slide—gay sights, we were told, in the winter; the house was being repaired, in the absence of its occupier at Winnipeg, and seemed in somewhat dilapidated condition. Each succeeding governor brings his own decorations—tapestry, pictures, etc., and carries them away with him at the termination of his appointment. After seeing the rather pretty Rideau falls, we trammed back to the city, and saw the Chaudière falls and lumber department; went over the exteriorly-fine and imposing Gothic Parliament Houses, built of a beautiful cream-coloured sandstone, diversified with deep red—the whole presenting a rich effect of colour, enhanced by the beautiful green lawns in the midst of which it stands. A fine library adjoins, containing 20,000 volumes.

Next we visited the Geological Museum, containing, among many other interesting objects, a huge meteoric stone, 25 per cent. nickel, which, before being cut, weighed 300 lb. The Cathedral of Notre Dame, with two fine towers, 200 feet high, but poor interior with the exception of a fine reredos; and various other sights.

The next day (October 6th) we left Ottawa by the 6 a.m. train to Prescott and Kingston, whence we had intended going by boat to Toronto, but found it would start too late, so took the next train and arrived there at 9 p.m., and stayed the night at the Queen's Hotel, only very so-so; baths exorbitantly dear, whereas at Ottawa they were had for nothing. This hotel is certainly not worthy of so phenomenally a rising city, scarcely below Chicago in

commercial importance ; from its advantageous position on the north-west shore of Lake Ontario, gathering to itself the entire trade of north-west Canada, whilst in full communication with the American frontier on the southern side of the Lake.

October 7th being Sunday, we went to the early service at St. Michael's Cathedral, possessed of a lovely spire, but a somewhat gaudy interior, in which we heard charming hymn-singing by the school children, accompanied by an excellent organ.

We had been told that in the "Queen City," as Toronto is designated, Sunday was so strictly kept that there would be some difficulty in getting about—all locomotion by trams or cabs being tabooed. However, we managed to get a carriage, which took us to Victoria Park, and one of the great lumber yards, crammed with huge stacks of fresh-smelling planks cut to various sizes, the produce of the great forests of Ontario, with a charming foreground of broad river and sand, beyond which, fringed with masses of tall trees of brilliant gold, towered the enormous and picturesque pile of municipal and parliamentary buildings, and the magnificent University of Toronto, with its superb central tower and many turrets, and Observatory, School of Science, Library, etc.; all of which we visited and greatly admired, as well as the too short time we had to spare allowed. The whole city is exceedingly well built of very handsome material ; and its society, in refinement and cultivation of literature and science, is said to equal, if not surpass, its American rival, Boston—called by some the Florence, by others the Athens, of the New World.

In the afternoon we left for Niagara, which we reached a little before sunset.

CHAPTER III.

Niagara.

WE lodged on the Canadian side, at the "Clifton House" hotel. It immediately faces the American Fall, and has a lovely view of the more distant Canadian Horseshoe Fall.

We were sorry to hear that English travellers mostly go to the hotels on the American side, across the river—un-patriotic of them and unwise; for the Canadian is by far the more impressive side to stay on.

The American Prospect Park side is within a few minutes' walk of scenes beautiful and magnificent beyond description: you are close to the American rapids above the American Fall, and not very far from the Canadian rapids.

But from the Canadian side you have before you, full in face, the entire panorama of all the falls, the Horseshoe, the Central, and the American. And you are within only five minutes' walk of the Great Iron Bridge, suspended at a giddy height above the boiling, seething, whirling waters below the American Fall, crossing over them to the American side, and along which, filled with awe and a sensation of terror, drenched with the spray, and deafened with the roar, you creep or drive nervously across—to find yourself at once in Prospect Park.

This we did not do till the following morning.

The day was too far spent when we arrived to do more than wander to and fro, in the drenching spray, the long space between Fall and Fall. The American Fall, exactly in front of the hotel, was all radiant with rainbows, bewilderingly magnificent, and is the higher of the two, 167 feet, 1,060 feet wide. But, we passed on to the infinitely greater glories of the Horseshoe, before the majesty of which one stands absolutely stricken dumb with awe, and spellbound.

No words can ever describe the glory of this Fall. The terrific sense of tremendous force and might !

The huge, perpetual, never-ending wave, 158 feet high, and more than 3,000 wide, a mighty, ever-rushing wave no ocean can ever equal, curling downward, gleams of gold and blue and emerald green, transfused with light, as the water comes falling, falling for ever; ever-rising clouds of spray, drifted hither and thither by the wind, breaking into loveliest fountains of showery rainbow; or carried by the breeze, in snowy spirals, far, far up into the sky; or hovering over the falls, like spirits of the mist. Then the thundering, appalling, ceaseless sound, with never one moment of rest for ever!

After supper we came out again, by a glorious moonlight, to wander along, past the American, towards the sounding Horseshoe Fall; grand, beautiful, and majestically mysterious in the glittering moonbeams, with its drifting clouds of snowy spray for ever rolling heavenwards.

Next morning early, in lovely and brilliant sunshine, we drove over the Suspension Bridge, 250 yards below the Falls, to the American side, into Prospect Park, twelve acres beautifully laid out with shrubs and trees and turfу lawns to the river's edge. You drive round and about to

admire the various lovely points of view; then walk to Prospect Point, on the very brink of the American Fall, where, protected by a stone balustrade, you take your first terrific impression of the perpendicular mass of raging water madly dashing into the abyss beneath, shining and glittering in the sun, and rising in wreaths of misty rainbows. Half deafened by the magnificent cannonade of waters you tear yourself away and cross the Goat Island bridge, 300 feet long, suspended over the giddy rush and swirl of the American rapids capering and dancing along in graceful, sportive, sea-like billows, as far as the eye can reach. You linger on the centre of the bridge, dazed and fascinated, the swaying structure trembling and writhing in the ceaseless mighty impact of the rushing under-current, the surface waves still playing and dancing, throwing up their spray in fountains of diamonds, as they bound and curvet along !

On the farther side of the bridge you pass, midst lovely shrubs, to a point overlooking the central Fall, the beauty and glory of which defies description. You are deafened yet fascinated; rainbowy clouds and showers flit round you, and the dancing billows, having danced to the edge full of life and joy, take one sudden despairing plunge into the seething abyss below, with wild sounds of mingled thunder and shrieking wailing; whirling currents and rushes of air fighting rushes of water—a pandemonium of mad rush and sound !

This is, perhaps, from above, the grandest and loveliest view of all; but leave it at last one must, and you proceed to drive or walk all over the Goat Island, through its groves of trees and park-like expanse till, at the farther end you pass, by bridges, from lovely rocky wooded isle to isle—the “three sisters” and “little brother;” and

crossing between, suddenly come upon the sight of sights, the indescribably superb, gigantic, towering flow of the glorious Canadian rapids ! they come with a mountainous, swirling, tumultuous rush, compressed into the rocky narrows. Looking up the river you see a wide far-spreading expanse of apparent sea, with long unbroken lines of foaming giant waves, stretching from distant shore to shore, away into dim unfathomed distance—line after line of breaking foam. Nearer and nearer the billows roll, till, close before you, they rise and gather and swirl into one gigantic purple-blue, compressed, mad, furious rushing wave, and plunge between the narrowing rocks with appalling deafening roar, and not-to-be-resisted upward dash of foam, with a velocity of thirty miles an hour, plunging, bolting, past you, behind you, out of sight, till, with wild thundering yell of fury, they reach their fate, the Fall.

And this goes on for ever !

Here I stayed for hours, seated on a rock by the side, just above the mad maniacal swirl of current and whirlpool—endeavouring—alas how vainly ! to fasten its fugitive yet ever renewed life and storm on paper.

After a long time, giddy with the glamour and clang and roar and ever swiftly-passing swirling rush, and the awful solitude, I fled—as if pursued by demons of the deep—and made the best of my way back across Goat Island and Prospect Park, and over the suspension bridge to Clifton House—at 4.30 p.m.—long after the luncheon had been put away and the cooks retired, and no possibility of even a cup of tea, which is the case nearly all over America, and is really a quite reasonable arrangement. However, the sight I had seen was well worth a fast ; and re-donning my mackintosh, for at Niagara you must always be cased in waterproof, I set off to walk by the grand Queen Victoria-

Niagara-Falls-Park, skirting alongside the river to the Horseshoe Fall, through lovely groves of waving trees and greenest turf—nearly drowned in spray in passing—to the magnificent Loretto Academy, superbly situated in gay shrubberies on the highest ground, just above the Horseshoe, commanding the whole bird's-eye view of the Falls, with their drifting clouds of mist; the Goat and Sister Islands, the lovely curve of wooded shore, and vast width of river sweeping majestically round; and the shining, tossing, green-blue waves of shallow rapids in front; the whole glorious view flaming in the fiery red-gold light of the setting sun, the over-arching sky one glow of scarlet and orange, crimson-pink and delicate green-blue, and the loveliest fleecy cloudlets, half spray, half cloud, of rainbow hue.

This Academy educates a great number of young ladies (200 to 300 at a time) belonging to the best families, Canadian and American. The establishment is Catholic, but such is the extreme toleration in religious matters, that more than two-thirds of the pupils belong to other denominations, intrusted, with perfect confidence, to the nuns.

The Lady Superior, attended by several very charming American nuns, kindly showed me over the whole of the huge and splendid building, full of every modern comfort and educational appliance; and finally into the immense and very handsome “general schoolroom,” where the whole of the young ladies were assembled, who, as we entered, struck up “God save the Queen,” which they sang charmingly in chorus, in compliment to England and the Queen-Empress, who is held here in great veneration. The Lady Superior conducted me to a sort of throne, on which she and I took our seats, the nuns seated round; whilst the

pupils recited poems in various languages, and performed on the harp, violin, and piano, singing hymns and songs, and bringing specimens of their drawings, paintings, and embroideries to be admired—an admiration there was no need to simulate, for many were quite admirable.

These young ladies were not attired in uniform, but in neat skirts and blouses, as plain or ornamented as each pleased; some, perhaps, unnecessarily smart, which gave the Lady Superior occasion to say to them, in a little parting speech, that she wished they would adopt the sensible and wholesome English fashion of plain serge and mackintosh (an attire, to say the truth, of which I felt a little ashamed in that very smart assemblage ; but nothing else is possible in that spray-besprinkled region).

After a few words of appreciation and thanks on my part, we descended from our throne, and proceeded, amidst profound curtsies on the part of the pupils, to which we responded by equally polite bows, to the charming guest-rooms, where the kind Lady Superior insisted on my partaking of some most excellent wine of their own making and lovely cakes of their own baking. They then showed me a monthly magazine called "The Niagara Rainbow," entirely and very cleverly written by the pupils, which is now regularly sent to me, of course. After a while I took my leave, and, to the astonishment of the nuns (for Americans rarely walk more than they can help), proceeded to walk back to the hotel—a lovely and delicious walk skirting the falls and river, for which my mackintosh became very requisite. Everywhere a gentle rain rains on you, and often not gently. Indeed, as you near the Fall, sudden tremendous cataracts of spray nearly take you off your feet ; the thundering, awe-inspiring, never-ceasing cannonade of weird sound turning you cold with nervous dread ; the

cold mystery of the moon adding to the creepy terrors of the ghostly shriekings and howlings of the water-spirits.

Next morning (October 9th) we started early by electric tram to see the Whirlpool Rapids, about a mile below the suspension bridge, to which you descend in an almost perpendicularly-inclined railway car, straight down from the high banks to the level of the river, at this point so narrowed (to a width of 300 feet) that the tumultuous and rushing waters are forced up in the centre to a height of 30 feet, all broken into giant waves of emerald-green, tearing along with a tremendous impetus and might that fills you with terrified awe!

And this was the spot chosen by Captain Webb to attempt to swim across, as if any feeble human strength could withstand that mad, resistless rush! Naturally he was caught in the vortex, and rushed, a corpse, into the fearful whirlpool beyond, and tossed and whirled for days in its awful gyrating depths, before floating, unrecognizable, away. Here, also, on a rope of hemp thrown from cliff to cliff Blondin dared to cross—successfully! and some have safely floated down in cylinders.

Once more we mounted the cliff, and pursued our way till just above the Whirlpool, caused by the sudden rectangular bend in the cliffs, a fearful and giddy sight! that gives some sort of idea of what that terrible maelstrom must be in the far-off northern seas.

Beyond the Whirlpool, after at last emerging from its giddy, maniacal, gyrating depths, as if tired out by the fearful, ceaseless tumult, the river seems to collapse exhausted, and, almost calmly, its energy all dead, pursues its way to the Lake Ontario.

We returned, and after securing luncheon, proceeded to

the Horseshoe Fall, to view its wonders from below and beneath.

I confess to some trepidation and hesitation before allowing myself to be dressed in the queer costume necessitated by the terrific shower-bath to which we were about to be subjected ; and, listening with awe to the ceaseless, deafening “thunder of waters,” got into the elevator which takes you down from Table Rock to the abyss below.

You emerge in a dizzying and terrific babel of sound on a mass of slippery rocks, over which flights of still more slippery steps conduct you to the very foot of the Falls, drenched and drowned in spray.

Scarcely able to see or breathe, with the help of the guide we climbed, and slipped, and staggered, as best we could, into the hollowed-out rock at the back of the wild seething mass of green waters—the “Cave of the Winds,” where, as well as the awful rushes of blinding spray and wind will let you—clinging to the slippery, rocky wall, you stand on a narrow ledge face to face with the terrible, stupendous power and might of resistless water and air ! Green thundering masses ceaselessly crashing on to the rocks below with sounds as of great guns, and blasts of horns, and deep notes as it were of an organ, reverberating and wailing and shrieking, and drenching torrents of spray and spirals and violent rushes of air hurled into your face as if from a catapult. The appalling, terrific sense of awful, chaotic, fateful force, and the marvellous, glorious beauty of it ! The emerald-green flood, and floods of foam, tinted with sunshine, falling and falling for ever !

Enough to say, that after a time, and an experience for which we must be for ever the infinitely richer, we found ourselves in the upper world again, our guide imploring to be allowed to photograph us in the draggled hideousness

of our attire. Needless to say I declined, as did G., and having speedily got rid of our mackintosh incumbrances and resumed our own garments, requested our aggrieved guide to take us to the "Burning Spring," close by. You enter a walled, roofed-in, windowless space, in the centre of which you see a dark, bubbling pool of water encompassed with stone. The door is carefully shut, and all is dark. Suddenly a rising, bubbling fountain ascends, a torch is lit and applied, and the fountain bursts into flame and jets of fire, which sparkle and rage and spread till, what with the burning heat and the sickening fumes of the sulphureted hydrogen gas, you are choked and scorched, and make a rush for the door.

After all these overpowering sensations, I was glad to go quietly back, and try to sketch the, alas! unsketchable; and G. started off to compare the "Cave of the Winds" under the American Fall with the Canadian, much, he thought, to the advantage of the latter. That night it rained, but we went out all the same after supper, for the rain of the clouds or the rain of the Falls seemed to make little difference.

The next morning, G. went for a trip below and round about the Falls in the little steamer "Maid of the Mist," but was so blinded and drowned and drenched by the spray that he saw nothing, and came back nearly deaf and blind.

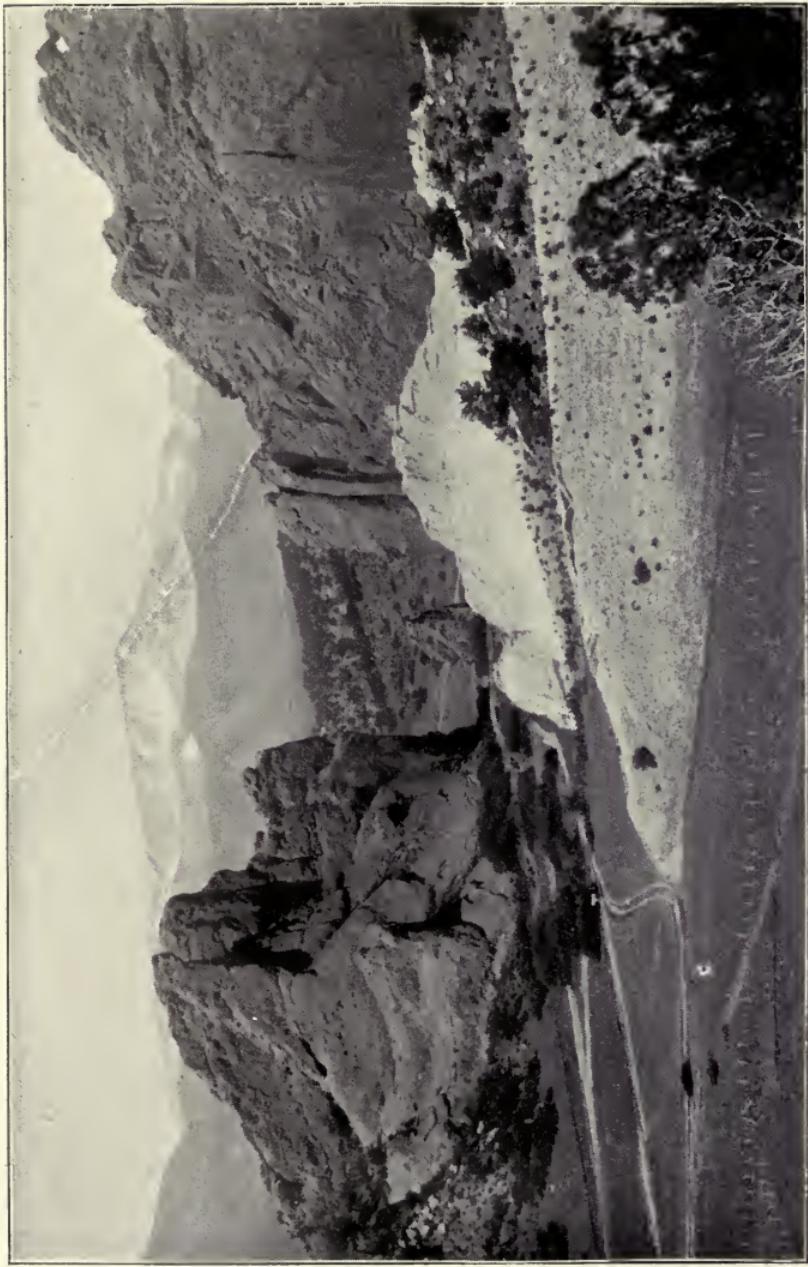
I, meantime, went across to the American side and spent a delicious, enchanting day, wandering over the islands, and to Porter's Bluff at the extremity of Goat Island, where you stand exactly over the near edge of the glorious Horseshoe Fall. Indescribably magnificent is this view! You look from a high summit of rock, over rich masses of gold-tinted, graceful trees, fringing down the steep

sides, to the edge of the vast width of water, stretching away to the Canadian shore—near which, over rocky shallows, the river tosses and tumbles in glittering rapids to the mighty edge of the Fall.

But on this side, here beneath you, there is no turmoil of rapid or rush. All is tranquil and calm, for the smooth waters are here fathoms deep, and majestically flow, with a fateful and strong, but reposed current, till they gracefully arrive at the brink: over which, with a mighty sound as of deep-toned thunder, without haste or pause, they curl and glide their glassy green depths, with a serene and glorious majesty—their fall into the abyss soon shrouded and lost in ever-ascending and wreathing clouds of misty spray, whirling and rising till lost in the sky.

It was here that the Indians were wont every second year to send, crowned with roses, and paddling her flower-wreathed canoe, over the glassy flood into the abyss, the most beautiful maid of their tribe, in tribute to the dread spectral phantoms and spirits of the Mist.

You can follow, if you wish, a path thickly shaded with trees, down steps cut in the rock, to Terrapin Point, a rocky, slippery ledge on the very brink of the curling green roll. I did; and then, wet and dizzy and deafened exceedingly, returned to the Bluff above, where you can sit and sketch—if it were possible! the ever-varying, marvellous, sunlit, glorious tints of exquisite blue and green and amber on that wondrous edge! all the while drenched in never-ceasing, up-rising fountains of spray. I stayed till the declining sun warned to fly—reaching the other side just in time for, alas, the 6 p.m. departing train.



GARDEN OF THE GODS. P. 36.



CHAPTER IV.

Chicago—Denver—Colorado Springs—Manitou—Pike's Peak—Garden of the Gods—Cheyenne Cañon.

OUR line skirted the shores of Lake Erie to Buffalo, where we changed trains, and travelling all night, reached Chicago in the morning, just before daybreak, October 11th. We went for breakfast to the magnificent Auditorium Hotel, entirely built of huge cyclopean blocks of rough-hewn as well as polished granite; the massive entrance formed of gigantic columns of polished pink granite, the interior resembling a sort of huge Egyptian palace. Immediately afterwards we proceeded in trams and electric cars from end to end of this wonderful emporium of commerce, and visited several of the immense parks situated on the sea-like shore of the grand Lake Michigan, with great rolling, attacking waves, only kept in check by enormously strong sea-walls of rough-hewn granite.

Chicago, I need not say, is built on a gigantic scale—huge, cyclopean, portentous—and sixty years ago consisted of a little village with less than one hundred inhabitants! Now, the towering buildings “scrape the sky”—some very handsome, and all imposing, from their bulk and extent, and the solid, massive granite of which they are built. The parks, especially Lincoln Park, are of vast extent and beautifully kept; long rows of brilliant flower-beds, conservatories, fountains, statues, and monuments,

particularly the magnificently placed, superbly colossal, monumental building in memory of Abraham Lincoln.

It was too far to go to the site of the "World's Fair" of the previous year, nor would it have been worth while, most of the great exhibition buildings having been pulled down ; nor did I care to see the Union Stockyards, which live pigs enter at one end as pigs, and come out in five minutes at the other as sausages. So I wandered contentedly over the gardens and parks, all admirably well-kept, and after seeing the City Hall, and some of the principal buildings and residences, returned to the "Auditorium," which has a great theatre attached to it, for supper, before starting Westward ho !

All night long our train rattled along at headlong speed, rocking and swaying, till half the passengers felt sea-sick, and the wonder is that it kept hold of the rails at all. Luckily, on these long journeys to the Far West, passengers, except in the "sleepers," are rare and few, so that we were able, to our great joy, to remain the whole night in the ordinary car and keep the windows open, and I spent much of it looking out at the moonlit passing scene —past plains and prairies with no sign of human life. The sun rose in a cloudless sky and saw us rushing, rushing, past towns and rich farming lands, through boundless plains of rolling grass—a sea of waving golden verdure, wild, solitary, and beautiful ; through the Indian reservation, where, however, we saw no Indians nor living creature—on and on, everywhere a sea of green ; here and there troops of horses and cattle quietly feeding, occasionally a mounted cowboy keeping watch—far and far between, a stockaded ranche.

On we sped, all through that day, having good meals "aboard ;" on through the night, at last the rosy dawn



ROYAL GORGE. P. 40.

glorifying the distant first view of the snow-peaked Rocky Mountains.

We had been due at Denver before 6 a.m.; but all at once, long before daylight, we came to a sudden standstill, which roused up the amiable conductor who was comfortably reclining on two chair-benches in our car. After a short time he returned and resumed his comfortable pose, saying it was only the engine-wheels which had caught fire, but that they had been fixed up with grease and we should now move on. This we presently did, but only at a creeping pace, and even so had to stop several times to again put out the fire. It was particularly annoying for us, as we had hoped to catch the early train at Denver to Georgetown and the famous "Loop," which makes a round through some of the finest scenery of the Rockies. Despairingly, we watched our watches galloping on whilst the train broke into a sort of gentle trot, which at last landed us at Denver City, just twenty minutes after the "Loop" train was timed to start! It was the more trying, as the sky was so exquisitely clear and cloudless that we should have seen the views, near and far, to the utmost perfection; and the next day being Sunday, no train would be going up the "Loop"—so we had to give it up, and content ourselves with exploring the beauties of Denver.

In the extraordinarily clear atmosphere of Colorado the innumerable serrated snowy peaks of the lovely Rocky chain, fifteen miles distant, stood out brightly distinct, softening, as the day advanced, into the loveliest cerulean mists and shadows.

The "Queen City of the Plains" is one of the most wonderful examples of American growth and "push." Not thirty years ago it consisted merely of a small and

straggling mining camp ; now it is a wide-spreading and magnificent city, with grand public buildings, including a superb court-house seated on the high "Capitol" hill ; long streets of immense width, delightfully shaded with cotton-wood and pepper trees, every street to the west ending in exquisite vistas of the blue Rockies ; theatres, opera-house, numerous costly churches, a "city park" of immense extent, containing lakes, conservatories, and a zoological garden—in short, a miracle of enterprise and rapid growth ! We had an excellent dinner in the great elevated dining saloon of the principal hotel, which shows, from its many windows, a beautiful view of the snow-clad range ; after which we flew down to the depot ("station" in America means the "lock-up," or "police office"), just in time for the 3 p.m. train to Colorado Springs, where we arrived at 6 p.m., after a lovely journey through richest plains of that exquisitely brilliant emerald-green "Alfalfa" grass, upon which are reared such magnificent herds of cattle and horses ; at first running parallel with the rocky range, Titian-blue, snow-crowned ; then rising high to the "Divide," amid pine-clad heights and rocky, fantastic crags ; down again, hills on one side, boundless prairie on the other ; sparkling streams, with feathery banks of graceful cotton-trees of the most dazzling golden hue, till we stopped at Colorado Springs, framed in autumnal gold, the great blue snow-peaked hills beyond.

We left the train, and crossed to another little railroad that takes you, in a few minutes, to the charming little crag-perched hamlet of Manitou, seated at a height of 5,000 feet, where are the famous and delicious effervescent soda springs, as well as iron ones ; Colorado Springs, despite its name, possessing none.

The sun was setting in a blaze of golden glory as we

walked from the depot to "Barker House," a most comfortable and charming little hotel, with wide flowery verandas and sparkling fountains, and baths attached to every bedroom. After a nice supper, we wandered out into the lovely moonlight, softly shining on the rippling fountains and the shimmering trees, and casting mysterious gleams on the high white peak, one of the highest of the Rockies, well known as "Pike's Peak."

The next morning the sun rose, as ever in happy



TYPE OF UTE INDIAN.

Colorado, in a sky of cloudless azure, and after a visit to the various garden-inclosed springs, and breakfast, we proceeded, the day being Sunday, to a little chapel picturesquely perched on a moss-grown crag, midst pine-clad heights.

After an early luncheon, we drove in a little open four-wheeled carriage, with no top or awning happily (for these tops terribly obstruct the views), with two sleek and somewhat too-lively horses, well held in hand, however, and excellently driven by an equally lively Texan ex-cowboy, who entertained us with terrific stories of his long-ago encounters with buffaloes, snakes, and Indians, to the "Ute

pass," once the great highway of the Ute Indians, as they swept down on the war-path to fight the neighbouring rival tribes, or to hunt the great herds of buffalo on the broad prairie below.

The road consists mostly of boulders and holes, mended here and there, in the worst places, with branches and trunks of trees, over which you go bounding and bumping, winding in steep sharp curves, skirting the serpentine course of the little foaming and fussing "*Fontaine-qui-bouille*," so named by the French missionaries who, more than two hundred years ago, discovered this lovely haunt of Indian braves.

Higher and higher, through a wilderness of rocks and peaks and glorious pines; high above the brawling brook, which the road overhangs, on perpendicular masses of pink and white granite, too narrow for more than one vehicle; so if two chance to meet, generally at full gallop, one has to back till it finds a space wide enough for the other to pass.

At last you come to the lovely "rainbow falls," where the rushing, roaring little "*Fontaine-qui-bouille*" tosses itself headlong down for 100 feet. Near by are the "Manitou grand caverns," in the enormous natural "opera house" of which, with strange simulation of boxes and galleries, hangs suspended the "grand organ" of tubular stalactites, emitting, when struck, two octaves of silvery, perfect, musical sound. A "cave of the winds" is also hollowed by nature in the "amphitheatre," a huge circle of towering precipices of granite and sandstone of gorgeously variegated hue, the road being ascended through the grand Williams' cañon.

After a fearful and break-neck gallop down the tortuous passes, the ex-cowboy shouting with laughter, and flourishing his whip the more as he saw how little I liked it, we

were dropped at the Iron Springs, where, after a "five o'clock tea" of chalybeate water, we saw a splendid collection of minerals found in the Rockies, the beauty and interest of which kept us till after dark, when we walked back to our comfortable hotel for supper.

Next morning (October 15th) the same exquisite deep blue, cloudless sky and delicious sunshine prepared us for a day of enchantment.

At 8 a.m. we found ourselves, with about thirty others, at the Eagleman's Cañon, near the iron springs, ready to take our places in the little cog-wheel train, consisting of one long car with seats for fifty, the sides and front and back consisting almost entirely of glass, pushed up (from behind) the steep nine miles of track to the top of Pike's Peak by the enormously powerful little engine, or "locomotive" as they call it, with its extraordinarily complicated machinery of ninety separate cogs, with which it clutches hold of the steeply-inclined rack-rails. Extraordinary precautions have been taken to insure the safety of the line. The rack-rails are all constructed of the best Bessemer steel, each rail set into three die-forged chairs, the bolts of which are so made as to allow for the natural expansion and contraction of the metals. One hundred and forty-six anchors are fixed in the solid rock, to which the rack-rails are firmly bolted, to prevent any possibility of slipping, and the car provided with a system of tremendously powerful brakes.

G. and I had been so fortunate as to have the front seats reserved for us, so, with nothing between us and the scenery but plate glass, at first thrown open, we had, during the whole ascent and descent, a perfectly unobstructed view.

You start with a feeling of awed expectancy, to be more

than justified by the mingled beauty and stupendous grandeur of the ascent.

At first, huge sloping hills clothed to the summit with superb forests of fir and pine; a lovely, brawling, amber-coloured brook following the line of the track into a desolate region of hanging rocks, stupendous masses and columns of pink granite, of every fantastic shape, poised on end and balanced, as it were, on a point, ready to fall and overwhelm you!

Then, grand pines again, succeeded by narrowing passes, edged by mighty cliffs of red granite rising perpendicularly into the blue sky; then through a stretch of hill-encompassed, green, flowery plain, with groves of pines, and delicate aspen, sheets of feathery gold; the Lion's Gulch, a mighty, towering conglomeration of pyramids, towers, and castles of granite, its base sentinelled by single rows of giant pines. Ever ascending, we rise to a barren region of great, wild, desolate yellow sandstone hills where trees no longer grow; up and up, the atmosphere growing colder and more icy, the rarefied air beginning to tell on many of the company, some even staying behind at the "halfway house."

We reach the snow line and enter upon a vast expanse of dazzling snowfields and glittering peaks; up the steepest gradient of the ascent, and at the end of the second hour attain the summit.

Here we alight; one or two fainting dead away, unable to bear the rarefaction of the air. Fortunately there was a doctor among the passengers who at once attended to them.

An excellent aid to mountain-climbing is the "Erythroxylon Coca" (of Peru), a few leaves of which, taken occasionally during high ascents, entirely nullify the ill effects of rarefaction. They also remove sensations of

fatigue and breathlessness in difficult climbing, and mitigate hunger and thirst.

Coca is invariably used in this way, in the Andes, by South American Indians, and enables them easily to endure the bitter cold and rarefied air at the greatest heights to which it is possible to ascend.

It acts also as a real food and drink, and is so easily carried, five or six small leaves being enough for a day, that travellers, and particularly mountain-climbers would do well to provide themselves with this easily-carried and most efficient specific.

To return to Pike's Peak, 14,147 feet high. After leaving the car, we climbed to the highest point of the group of deep-red rocks, from which the winds had blown all the snow. A hut-like little inn stands here; now, unluckily, closed for the winter, and a small meteorological station, generally lived in all the year round.

The whole panorama indescribably grand. The fantastic foreground of vivid crimson rocks; the glittering snow-fields shining and sparkling in the radiant sunshine, shadowed here and there, in their depths, by fugitive sunlit vapoury mists of the heavenliest blue, deepening to purple; range upon range of vast mountain chains of loveliest form; and, towering high above all, the wild serrated ridge of the exquisite, for ever ice-bound Sangre de Cristo, in the dimmest distance, stretching from far north to south, one long, unending, wind-blown, up-tossed sea wave as it were, frozen for ever to icy stone! To the west, great, desolate, up-heaved, violent red and yellow rock-masses, the lower rich wooded hills entirely hidden; whilst, deep down below, one vast, sunny plain of waving golden prairie stretches far as eye can reach, into vaguest, far-off, mysterious, misty light.

Too soon, alas, the short hour of stay rolled by, and down again we had to go ; this time the engine in front, regulating and supporting the downward motion—so that we still had our unobstructed view of the glorious beauty of each passing scene—soon to be left to a winter of undisturbed repose broken only by wild harmonies of the winds and storms.

A week later the train would run no more till June.

By a little past one we were home again at the hotel, and after a hurried refection found our attentive ex-cowboy waiting with his little four-wheeled gig and his frisky horses to take us the lovely drive to the “Garden of the Gods.”

It is, indeed, a garden ideally fit for the gods ! a perfect dream of poetic beauty !

You drive on to great emerald-green stretches of flower-strewn exquisite turf, fringed and grouped with lovely masses of pepper and cotton trees, their delicate feathery foliage of every brilliant hue from purest gold to orange, scarlet, and that exquisite *vieux-rose* only to be seen in the New World Fall, which so deliciously contrasts, yet blends with every other tint—and here and there groups of solemn pines.

To the eastward the garden is guarded by the sun-bathed giant hills, veiled in vapoury mists, of that glorious deep-toned blue that Titian loved and painted, crowned by the icy peaks and glittering snow-heights on which we had stood, entranced, in the morning.

Facing this vision of sunny, dreamy, radiant beauty, the lovely *Pleasaunce* is jealously shut in at the back, and around, by cyclopean walls of flaming scarlet sandstone, massed into towering, castellated bastions, loopholed and moated ! At only one point at this end may the garden be

entered, at the “Gateway of the Gods,” flanked by giant crimson towers, and having in its centre a portentous scarlet erection—sentinels of pine beyond.

Within the garden (500 acres in extent) rise in all directions, in violent contrast to the vivid green of the undulating, flowery, mossy turf, scarlet, pink, and crimson shapes, eccentric and startling beyond measure. Titanic giants; huge coils of knotted snakes, lions, camels, colossal toads! Pinnacled spires, tapering 300 or 400 feet up into the pure blue sky till they seem of the veritable sharpness of needles.

Ruined cathedrals, Egyptian temples supported on massive crimson columns; every strange eccentric form, weather and water worn, all flaming in vividest scarlet and every shade of crimson, glowing and flashing in the radiant rose-gold of the declining sun; a world’s marvel of colour, gorgeous, dazzling, yet infinitely harmonious! a true poet’s dream, in which we lingered till passing time forced us on, and we drove through the wide entrance of the “gateway,” looking back on the brilliant wonderland and passing into the boundless prairie with its waving, shimmering, feathery golden grass, where, of old, the great herds of buffalo fed and rushed—now silent, the mighty beasts extinct.

Outside the garden, in the prairie, is a curious “village of prairie dogs,” full of the burrows of these inoffensive little pretty creatures that play all day and sleep all night, and are popularly believed to live in their burrows in happy family harmony with rattlesnakes and owls! a delusion that has probably arisen, as says Mr. W. G. Smith, the great Colorado naturalist, from the fact that rattlesnakes often take possession of the comfortable burrows of the dogs, driving them away; and the owls haunt any newly turned earth, in the search for mice and such “small deer.”

Skirting the prairie we passed into a wooded park surrounded by huge terraces of snow-white sandstone—silvery white pinnacles rising high into the blue sky, the scarlet “garden” walls and sun-bathed azure mountains beyond.

Here, embosomed in lovely trees, midst which rise gigantic snow-white rocky freaks of nature, stands a charming flower-wreathed villa, the home of the engineering architect of the great Rio Grande Line.

We drove, still skirting the prairie, on high terraces of sandstone, alternately dazzling white and brilliant rose pink, the great plain stretching away in boundless golden green grassy waves, and so, winding and turning and ever wonderfully admiring, we wended our way once more to crag-perched Manitou—“Great Spirit”—so named by the Indians, who in days of yore flocked to the medicinal springs, provided, as they fondly believed, for the cure of all their ills, by their father, the Great Spirit.

At 6 a.m., October 16th, we left, with what deep regret ! this lovely many-fountained Manitou, and drove, under the care of our Texan cowboy, to Cheyenne Cañon, a distance of ten miles through the prairie, skirting the base of the mountains, the sky clear and blue as always in happy Colorado ; the sun bright and hot, the air exhilarating, trees with their dazzling autumnal tints relieved by deep-toned firs, till we turned a sudden curve into the mountains, under deep shade of huge pines, side by side with an amber creek, gaily leaping towards us over crimson boulders. Soon we came to giant vertical walls of red rock, the deep tree-shade becoming almost gloom and darkness, and at last stopped where the gay river had just taken three terrific leaps down three separate ledges of crimson granite ; we sprang from our machine and climbed to the foot of the Falls, and up steps to a higher level where, turning a bend

in the cliffs, we found that the lively creek had already achieved four splendid bounding leaps from red ridge to ridge. I tried to sketch but it was time to hurry away to catch the 10.30 train to Leadville. So back we drove into welcome sunshine once more, through exquisite meadows and golden tree groves, by a different and still more lovely route, to Colorado Springs, arriving not long before the tolling bell warned of the departing train.

I like these American train-bells, with their pleasant deep-toned clang; no horrible whistlings or ear-piercing shrieks, but a quiet majestic toll, as the stately locomotive comes and goes.

No one should leave the lovely Colorado state without testifying to its marvellous climate; dry, clear, exhilarating, bracing, buoyant and invigorating, and joy-giving beyond description. For asthma or consumption, or melancholia, it is a resurrection. The beauty of the sky far surpasses that of Italy, the sun for ever seems to shine, and the country is absolutely free from malaria or unhealthy vapours of any sort; to which must be added the innumerable curative and revivifying mineral springs.

Summer and winter it is always enchanting and health-giving to live in, and the beauty of its exquisite scenery is only equalled by its salubrity.

CHAPTER V.

"Royal Gorge" of the Arkansas—Leadville—Glenwood Springs
—into Utah.

FROM Colorado Springs we started on a further voyage of enchantment, the most wonderful part of which was the (happily) slow progress through the far-famed "Royal Gorge," in which the train, between huge overhanging precipitous walls of granite, follows the rushing course of the Arkansas river for eight miles, through bends and curves so narrow at times, that the track has had to be hung by iron girders wedged and fixed into the solid rock, actually suspended over the foaming, raging torrent. Here and there are breaks in the mighty rocky walls, and loveliest glimpses of distant snowpeaks and smiling valleys; and when we emerge out of the dark and frowning gloom and appalling grandeur of the Gorge, three huge, stupendous "sugar-loaf" peaks and distant snowy vistas, thick groves of solemn pines and golden poplars, and deep flowery meadows, still watered by the rushing river, delight our eyes.

Too short a glimpse of glorious beauty is given at the lovely Parkdale and Cotopaxi depots.

At beautiful Salida, with its stupendous views of the Sangre de Cristo range, those who are going up the famous Marshall Pass "connect" with another train of the line. But we, somewhat foolishly, instead of "stopping off" for



CHEYENNE FALLS. P. 38.

this further "round" experience whereby we should have seen the Gunnison river, with its magnificent Black Cañon and Curricanti Needle, pressed on; rising higher and higher through splendid scenery, till, up in the snow region, we found ourselves at 7 p.m. at Leadville—10,000 feet above the sea—the principal city of the great silver and gold mining centre, one of the highest dwelling spots in the world.

The atmosphere was rarefied and icy cold, and through deep snow we walked, a short distance from the depot, in the fast gathering gloom, to a comfortable little hotel, the "Vendôme."

At about 4 a.m. we struggled out again with lanterns through the snow to the depot, the white mountains around looming mysteriously in the darkness, the first slight streaks of rosy light just beginning to faintly glimmer in the east. At five our locomotive tolled its bell and away we went in the rosy dawn, through a glorious panorama of snow clad mountains, past the Mountain of the Holy Cross, on which, towards the summit, formed by two huge ravines crossing each other nearly rectangularly, filled with snow that never melts, a Latin Cross of perfect symmetry for ever shines. On we pass, into the depths between the pine-crowned rocky heights of the cañon formed by the Eagle river, where, perched at the giddy, perpendicular height of more than 2,000 feet on the very edge of the precipice, you catch sight of Gilman-town, the home of the miners of the Battle Mountain gold mine. On through the magnificent Grande Cañon in which, parallel with the train, rushes the snow-fed Rio Grande, hemmed in by huge disjointed masses of castellated rock; towers, giant columns, bastions, every fantastic shape of gorgeous-hued sandstone rock, turning the scarlet

“ Flamingo headland ” into a still more wonderful region of turreted towers and spires, minarets, and strange statuesque and animal forms, all aflame in scarlet and crimson, recalling the wonders of Manitou, till a long dark tunnel shuts out the dazzling scene, and amidst the clang-ing of the bell we emerge and stop at one of the most bewitching places in all America—Glenwood Springs.

Here we alighted, and at once walked to the Colorado Hotel, across the suspension bridge over the foaming Rio, where, in the narrow vale, it is joined by the Roaring Fork.

On the further side a charming series of green lawns, rising in terraced slopes bordered by delicate poplars with feathery foliage of vivid gold and pink, dazzling to the eye.

On these brilliant and admirably kept terraced lawns, like glassy mirrors, lie marble-edged pools of that exquisitely lovely tint of mingled *eau de Nil* and vivid turquoise blue, slightly opaque, that characterizes sulphur springs. In the centre the lovely waters rise in misty fountains, falling in showers of sparkling sapphires, and now and then a greeny, steaming mist gathers along the surface as the boiling sulphurous springs bubble up from the depths below.

Masses of brilliant flowers, and on the highest of this wide flight of successive terraced lawns stands an inviting and most charming hotel, with wide verandas almost hidden in roses and jasmine, fragrant and lovely, filled with every variety of luxurious reclining and rocking-chairs, with a background of precipitous, richly-wooded mountains, above which shine the snow-heights, and over all the heavenly Colorado sky.

We soon found ourselves comfortably established in this inviting “ home,” where we proposed to spend one happy



RIO GRANDE CAÑON. P. 41.

day of rest. First, a visit to the delicious baths at the foot of the terraced garden, where lies an immense pool of lovely steaming turquoise, in which, half shrouded and veiled by hot vapoury mist curling along the surface, disport themselves swimmers, who come swiftly sliding 30 feet down a steep toboggan into the hot and bubbling waters, and float and swim for hours.

G. soon joined them, whilst I went to the bath-house, a huge contiguous building, in which each bather has his own marble compartment, 10 or more feet square, with a shelving marble floor, in which you float in the greenish-blue water, always freshly bubbling in and flowing out at varying depths of from 4 to 10 feet.

After an excellent *déjeuner* G. went for a climb, and I sat out in the sunny garden for the delightful luxury of a whole afternoon of quiet sketching and reading, listening to dreamy strains of Chopin and Schubert wafted from the hotel above, mingling with the music of the breeze in the golden poplars, and the more distant murmur of the rivers.

While sketching I became suddenly aware of the presence behind me of a pretty little boy whom I had seen chasing the brilliant butterflies among the flower-beds. For some time he silently watched my sketch, so at last I asked him to sit down and whether he cared for painting? to which he answered, "Oh yes, ma'am, I'm always painting the skies and the hills, and when I'm big I'm to be a painter." We had a long talk, and seeing how tiny he was I was quite astounded at his asking whether I had been in Italy, and which of the splendid painters there I liked best? and how he longed to go to Rome and that his parents had promised to take him there, and what colours and paints I liked best to use? and all sorts of extra-

ordinary questions and remarks. He looked like a child of six ; but I began to think he must be a kind of dwarf and much older than he looked, and asked him how old he was. "Not quite eight, ma'am," he replied. All the American children, however tiny, always call you "ma'am" or "sir" most respectfully.

At last his mother came and claimed him, but he begged to be allowed to stay with me till his tea-time, to which she consented, so we stayed on till sunset chatting, and then he went to his tea; and after G. and I had dined, and had come into the charming hall full of luxurious rocking-chairs, to read and listen to the German musicians who had been playing their Chopin so beautifully, and whose whole time, morning, noon, and night seemed to be spent in playing, what should I see but my infant prodigy, sidling up across the chairs to plant himself in a huge one next mine, in which he proceeded to rock himself vigorously up and down.

I wonder if this taste for rocking-chairs will ever introduce itself into England? All over America they seem universal and indispensable. Even the most sumptuous drawing-room chairs are made to rock; and it is the funniest thing to see, in the evenings, a circle of gorgeously-dressed people all talking and rocking with the greatest energy, like so many children!

The next morning at six, I wandered into the garden to the lovely turquoise sulphur waters, for an hour of sketching before breakfast; when, what again should I see, coming singing and hopping along, but my little boy-painter! I was charmed to see him and to listen again to his funny and extraordinary precocity. I told him I should expect to hear of him, in the coming years, as a famous painter of pictures of his beautiful country; and after

breakfast we said good-bye, and parted, the best of friends ; G. and I having to run to the depot to catch the 9.30 train.

This was not the first time I had noticed the strange precocity of American children. They seem everywhere to be extraordinarily shrewd and old for their age, and as a rule, to be on a footing of complete equality with their parents, and in consequence to treat them with very little deference or respect, taking the initiative in everything, in the calmest way. The parents on the other hand, seem to take it all as a matter of course, and only laugh and smile, as if proud of the honour of being the happy possessors of such "smart" and "cunning," if irreverent and impertinent children ; and spoil them and give them their own way in everything, with the result that "*enfants terribles*" of an aggravated type abound. This, however, was far from being the case with my dear little friend at Glenwood, who was as nice and well-behaved as he was clever.

We left Glenwood Springs with great regret ; it is a lovely and charming resting-place, 5,000 feet above the sea, and a most convenient centre and starting point to all the finest points in the Rockies.

We might, of course, have stayed longer, and seen more of these beautiful mountains, but, in travelling, one seems, I think, to be, as it were, possessed by some force urging one on, lest some spoke should get thrown into the wheel of one's itinerary ; and one says to one's self, I shall return some day, and stay a week here, and a month there, and thoroughly examine all that is to be seen : this is only a sort of skeleton-tour, and there are such innumerable places and things in the world to be seen, and so much to be done, and life so short !

Well, on we went, through charming valleys, along the

lovely course of the Rio Grande, past the "Grande" junction, where various branches of this line converge, and the fruit is considered the finest in the West. Then, for more than one hundred miles, through limitless wavy undulations of bare and dusty desert (the "Colorado").

Strange and curious miniature cliffs and formations, and in the dim distance, great glistening white alkaline patches and white hills, and clouds of penetrating dust that nearly choke you; beginning the ascent of the Wahsacht, an outlying spur of the Rockies. Clay cliffs of a sky-blue colour contrasting vividly with towering scarlet sandstone castellated crags; through "Castle Cañon," grand in its huge domes and towers, almost closed at the end by the superb overhanging, huge crimson pillars called "Castle Gate," sentinelled by grand pines; and rising constantly, "Soldier-Summit," 7,465 feet, is attained, from which we descend through a succession of cañons till the green, park-like, beautifully fertile, and admirably cultivated valley of Utah, with its wide fresh-water lake, bordered by flourishing Mormon cities, comes into view; limited in the east by the snow-peaked Wahsacht, in the west by the bare and gleaming Oquirrh range, in the south by the richly wooded and snow-crowned Mount Nebo, whilst, in the almost too-dim distance, far away beyond Salt Lake City, might be seen, faintly glimmering in the fading light, the great Salt Lake.

CHAPTER VI.

Utah—Salt Lake City—Salt Lake—Park City—Ontario Silver mines—Mormon Sunday service—Fort Douglas—Ogden—Over the Sierra.

BY time we reached Salt Lake City it was pitch dark, so we went straight to the Knutsford Hotel (tolerably comfortable), and the next morning (October 19th) started early on foot, as we were "located" at quite a short distance from Temple Square, to see as much as "Gentiles" are allowed to see, of the great Mormon buildings. The streets are all of uniform and immense width, 132 feet, delightfully shaded by every kind of temperate fruit and flowering and ornamental tree, and are all at right angles to each other, ending in lovely deep blue, snow-crowned, mountain vistas.

Every house, except in the more commercial streets, stands detached, surrounded by a well-dressed garden full of bright, sweet-scented flowers and fruit trees, whilst many of the larger residences dominate over quite a little park of their own, full of choice shrubs and trees intermixed with gorgeous flower beds.

The "Bee-hive" home of Brigham Young, who, after the murder of "Joseph Smith the Seer" at Nauvoo, led the persecuted "Latter-day Saints" out of Illinois into the "promised holy Zion," is not so much of a palace as one would have expected. It was not even large enough

to lodge all his nineteen "earthly" wives (hundreds were "sealed" to him for Eternity); consequently he established the remainder in comfortable little flower-embowered homes which he built for them in the vicinity. A certain amount of separation between these unhappy women was probably desirable, if not necessary; for the text of one, amongst many, of his sermons runs that he "was sick of the everlasting whinings of many of the women of this territory, who say they are miserable and wading through a perfect flood of tears." He continues that he "is going to give them till the 6th of October next for reflection," and "my wives have got to do one of the two things: either round up their shoulders to endure the afflictions of this world and live their religion, or they may leave, for I will not have them whining about me. I will go into heaven alone rather than have scratching and fighting around me."

This degraded condition of things is now, nominally at least, at an end, the United States law having declared against it with severe penalties. But it being one of the chief articles of the Mormon creed that a man's "happiness and glory hereafter" will be strictly proportional to the number of wives he has had here below, they must either renounce this leading dogma or continue its practice in secret, which we were told they did.

One may hope that the Mormon doctrine of "atonement for sin," inexorably enforced by Brigham Young and preached and justified in his sermons, may now have become a dead letter. But no Gentile knows, except by hearsay, what rites or ceremonies are enacted within the massive walls of the huge towering "Temple," into which he may never set foot—revelation of the secrets of which entails penalty of death.

Happily "Gentile" opinion can now make itself heard strongly and numerically outside, for half the population of the city is now alien and bitterly opposed to Mormon doctrine and rites.

We wandered around the outside of this portentous and huge white granite fortress of a temple, imposing and magnificent as seen from a distance, less handsome when



TEMPLE.

looked at close, but absolutely original in architecture, and resembling no other building in the world; where marriages are "sealed," some for "time" and some for "eternity," and some for both; and the "saints" receive baptism by immersion, and vicarious "baptism for the dead"—one of the most cherished and vital Mormon tenets being "redemption beyond the grave;" and every saint takes an oath to avenge the murder of Joseph Smith the Seer.

The Temple is surrounded by gardens beautifully laid out from the designs of Brigham Young, who although originally a bricklayer by trade; and illiterate, seems to have had much sense of artistic beauty.

We next went to the Tabernacle, guided by a venerable and benevolent-looking Elder, with a long snow-white beard, who lost no opportunity of zealously crying up the excellence of his faith, which, he said, he was convinced, if duly expounded unto us and explained, we should inevitably embrace.

This huge and ungainly building of elliptic form, entered by twenty doors, supports, on forty-four massive sandstone pillars a huge wooden roof shaped in imitation of the shell of a turtle, and seats comfortably 9,000 persons, several additional thousands finding standing room on important occasions. At one end of the ellipse a huge orchestral platform accommodates the ecclesiastical authorities, elders, and singers; opposed, at the other end, by an equally huge and very magnificent organ, built in the city. The whole of the flat central floor is covered with seats, and raised galleries of seats encircle the sides. Concerts are sometimes held here, the Mormons having had the privilege of listening on one occasion to the enchanting singing of Adelina Patti and other celebrities.

As we proposed to assist at the weekly Mormon service —to which all Gentiles are most politely invited—on the following Sunday afternoon, we declined the offer of our amiable Elder to fetch the organist to play for us, and instead, went to see the Assembly Hall close by, with its fine tower surmounted by the colossal angel “Moroni,” who appeared in unromantic English Manchester to Joseph Smith the Seer, and announced to him where he should find the ancient “Book of Mormon” wherewith to supple-

ment the Bible, of which it is a very poor sort of imitation. This hall accommodates about 3,000 persons.

We next visited the "Zion Co-op.," an enormous building, interesting as the "first co-operative store" set up in the world, invented and established by Brigham Young in 1868, and since largely copied in both hemispheres.

The finest hospital in Utah (of which there are three, admirably appointed, in Salt Lake City) is St. Mary's Hospital, managed by the Catholic sisters of the Holy



SALTAIR BATHING BEACH.

Cross, into which Gentiles and Mormons are received indiscriminately.

After a hurried luncheon at our hotel we started, in heavenly weather, by a little branch-line train to Saltair bathing beach, on the shore of Great Salt Lake, a distance of fifteen miles, through gardens and orchards full of lovely fruit-laden trees of every temperate description, and vineyards, on to a wide expanse of desolate salt-plain, masses and sheaves of salt, shining in the bright sunshine like burnished silver, gathered together for removal, to be shipped and conveyed to the ore-smelters of Utah, Idaho, Montana, and Colorado for fluxing, the whole ground one sparkling

sheet of salt, contrasting, with marvellous brilliancy, the exquisite greens of the lake, varying from the loveliest emerald and chrysoprase to rippling shades of *eau de Nil* and turquoise blue, a soft breeze tossing the lovely curves of the little delicate translucent waves in shining spray on to the silvery sands.

Eighty miles of greeny-bluey salt water, covered with little foamy breakers, stretched far away into the clear horizon, with here and there groups of islets of the deepest ultramarine blue, bordered on one side by the absolutely bare, splendidly articulated (like the fine skeleton of a mountain), dazzlingly yellow and white, serrated "Oquirrh" range, beneath which shining lines of brilliant salt led, in gentle terraces, to the green dancing waves of the lake. On the other side, thirty to fifty miles across, the deep-blue Wahsacht hills, with shining snow-peaks.

It is a marvellously beautiful scene, but much spoilt for picturesque effect, however useful and agreeable in other ways, by the huge wooden pier leading out into the lake to the enormous bathing establishment, standing up like an island, with its countless bath compartments, to which a perfect labyrinth of galleries conduct; the whole building brilliantly lighted at night by electricity; tier upon tier of promenades; a gigantic hall, with airy open sides, in which concerts and balls are given; a great luncheon pavilion; an enormous swimming-bath for those who dare not venture into the exquisitely inviting waters of the lake; and, finally, galleries leading to wide staircases down to platforms, and toboggans, for those who have the courage for a slide, or a plunge into these salubrious and curative, pure salt, green, shimmering waves, in which, as in the Syrian Dead Sea, it is not possible to sink. You can sit on it with the greatest ease, occasional horizontal move-

ments of the hands being all that is necessary to maintain your position! Great care has to be taken to keep the water from entering eyes, nose, or mouth.

Far beyond the end of the Oquirrh range, in the green-blue watery distance, we seemed to see, mysteriously defined against the glowing western sky, white misty forms of phantom spires, shining like spears of silver in the radiance of the nearly setting sun. I sketched, as usual, and we filled little bottles with water from the lake. It tasted not in the least bitter, but simply salt, the purest, intensest salt. Many weeks afterwards the liquid in my little bottle had entirely evaporated, leaving a thick residue of the purest, whitest salt.

Four forms of life abound in the lake, the most important of which is a diminutive shrimp, *Arsenia fertilis*, about the size of a mosquito.

These tiny crustaceans frequent the surface, being rarely found at a depth of more than two feet. In fine summer weather they cover the shores, but rain drives them into the lake, where they congregate in such vast numbers as to tint the surface of the water. When caught in quantities, and well washed with fresh water, and cooked in fresh butter with a little pepper, they are said to form a perfectly delicious delicacy! They feed upon marine algæ and the larvæ of flies, that abound near the shore. No fish are to be found in the lake, the concentrated brine of which never freezes, even during frost many degrees below zero.

Too soon the train returned and took us back to the city, and after leaving it we went by electric car to the Wahsacht side of the lake, along which a short trip took us to the hot sulphur springs, in which I had a delicious dip inside the bathing-house, and G. in the great open-air hot swimming

pool outside. As we came out the sun had sunk in golden splendour into the green waves in the far west, and we returned to the city, seeing in the car an exquisitely lovely girl, with her satchel of books, returning from the high school near the baths with a troop of merry companions, a really perfect beauty, with a strangely subtle and lovely expression like *Mona Lisa's*. The only *perfect* beauty we came across in all America.

The next day, Saturday, we started early by a little branch and exceedingly unsafe miner's railway to Park City, the great mining camp, up into the snowy heights of the Wahsacht mountains, to visit the great Ontario silver mines.

After a precipitous ascent, wooded banks at first, then absolutely bare and barren hills and crags, except here and there a grassy "gulch;" wabbling from side to side where the water-mined banks had given way, sometimes leaning at an angle almost too sharp for recovery; they say scarcely a day passes without some mishap, but the miners are too reckless to care. In about two hours we arrived at Park City, 7,000 feet high, perched on a small sandy tableland, half surrounded by desolate snow-clad heights. It consists of one long wide street, with one or two little inns, at one of which we ate a hurried collation, very nicely served by the handsome and cheery landlady, whilst a sort of open brake was getting ready to take us up to the mines. It was bitterly cold, and an icy half-gale was blowing up dark threatening clouds, which, by time we started, were coming down in heavy flakes of snow.

All along the street, on both sides, stretched closely-built one-storied houses, several little churches of various denominations (very few, if any, Mormons here), a little theatre, much frequented by the miners, several large

stores, where the prices were very high—in one of them I had to give three dollars for a little woollen shawl that would have cost half-a-crown in England—a number of restaurants, and a hospital, much wanted for the frequent accidents; the whole little city overspread with an air of the utterest cold and desolation. Winter or summer the sun scarcely ever shines, bitter winds are always blowing, hail and sleet for ever fall, and in the winter the little city is half buried in snow. Then the miners can no longer come down from the heights where the mines are worked, and have to lodge in little wooden houses built closely together, near the long tunnel through which, in bad weather, they walk, protected from the deep snow, to the higher shafts.

Yet, in spite of all this desolation, there seemed a kind of cheery, brave, make-the-best-of-it expression on the faces of the rough and roughly-clad, yet by no means “ruffianly” toilers in this wild and bleak and lonely out-of-the-world spot. Most of them seemed quite “jolly;” and there was a good band and orchestra, and a large room where concerts are given, and sometimes, good theatrical companies passing through Salt Lake City take pity on the miners, and come up by the ricketty railway, and give them a good performance. All the population seemed to be on terms of “jollity” with each other. There seemed to be something in this rough and wildly-primitive life, perched up so far away from civilization, that seemed to draw the dwellers together, and warm their sympathies towards each other, keeping some degree of warmth, at least, in their hearts, to keep out, as it were, the forlorn and dreary, desolate cold without.

They burn cheerful wood-fires, supplied by the immense, though stunted, forests of the lower range.

We started from Park City in driving snow, the icy wind blowing in bitter blasts ; but we had a cheery driver, and two well-fed, strong horses took us up the sloshy and stony trail of five miles of constant steep ascent, occasionally through deep drifts of snow, very quickly.

G. had a letter of introduction to Mr. Scarum, the head manager, who most kindly and amiably took us himself all over the mines ; Mr. Murdock, the chief engineer, considered the best mining engineer in all the West, showing us and explaining the enormous and complicated water-wheel, which sets in motion the whole of the machinery of the mines, and that of the numberless galleries and chambers in which the silver ore, in its raw state, undergoes many washings, and wonderful processes, before it can be sent down into the world in the shape of bullion. I was greatly interested to find that Mr. Murdock was a native of Old Cumnock in Scotland, where his family had flourished for generations, and where he had himself lived till the age of twelve, retaining, as most Scotchmen seem to do, a loving recollection of the "old country," and its belongings ; and was most anxious that I should tell him of the present state of the family of the proprietor. We afterwards saw the very nice little house in this queer little mining camp, when he lives with his American wife and children.

From these heights, the views are exceedingly fine of the wide snowy mountain ranges and the fertile plains beneath.

Another young and very "rollicking" member of the staff of engineers much amused us by constantly repeating that for his part, he was a "true-born Briton," that's what he was, and that's what he would always be ; they wanted him to become an American, but no power on earth should tempt him to be ever anything but a true-born Briton !

He seemed exceedingly "jolly," besides being, as Mr. Murdock told us, the skilfullest engineer and most popular man in the hills. He reminded us of the "Pinafore" man, who "in spite of all temptation to change his nation remained an Englishman!"

We saw the miners all coming up for their dinners from the depths below, twenty at a time, standing all close together, on two square platforms suspended one on the top of the other, on which they were raised and lowered.

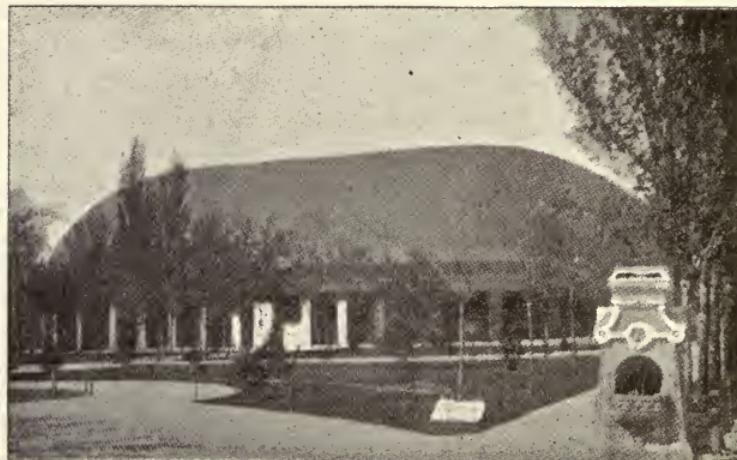
They were mostly young and very fine looking men; many of them not the least one's idea of rough miners. Mr. Scarum explained that great numbers of them were men of good family, who, from one cause or another, had come down in the world, some temporarily, and some permanently. He had had many "lords," he said; they went among their comrades merely by their christian names with some qualification attached, such as "Jumping Joe," "Guzzling Jack," etc., but he himself was aware, and kept a list, of their true patronymics; they would come, he said, to work for a short or longer time, and often, as soon as they had earned a small sum, would go and spend it in the cities, or speculate in land, and frequently, before long, return to make a fresh little "pile;" we should be surprised, he added, if we could hear the names of several who were working at that moment. Many of them certainly had the appearance and manners of gentlemen, in spite of their rough miner's life and garb.

G. was lowered down into the mines a great depth, and walked miles underground, whilst I walked about above, examining the various departments.

After a most interesting time, we drove back to Park City in pelting snow, and thence returned, as we came, by train, experiencing narrow escapes of capsizing in two

or three places, where the very unsafe foundations had still further subsided since morning.

The next day being Sunday (October 21st) we went to the early service at the Cathedral; this turned out to be a tiny chapel, which also did duty as school. It was filled with very smartly-dressed people, who all sang, somewhat out of tune. This had been the first non-Mormon church built in Utah after its settlement by the



TABERNACLE.

Mormons, and to which Brigham Young had subscribed 500 dollars. Afterwards we walked and sketched, returning to the hotel for an early luncheon before starting for the 2 p.m. one and only weekly service at the Tabernacle.

There was a crowded congregation of about equal numbers of men and women, through which we were conducted, by a most polite official, to comfortable seats not far from the platform, where sat the various dignitaries and elders.

The organ pealed forth magnificently, and several hymns,

a little in the "Salvation" style, were thundered forth from at least 8,000 throats, all in unison and perfectly good tune—the effect exceedingly grand.

After that, first one, then another occupant of the platform uprose and discoursed a few words of extempore prayer or exhortation, then sat down again; and an unhappy member of the congregation, who had prepared for no such thing, was solemnly invited to mount the platform and preach a sermon to the assembled "Saints." Evidently in a state of great perturbation, and most desirous to decline the invitation, but apparently not daring to refuse, he obeyed, and after a great deal of hesitation, said in a lachrymose and complaining voice, "Well, he did think it was hard, and he believed it was the practice of the Mormon Church alone—for all other Churches carefully chose and trained their preachers—that an unimportant and unpretending member of the congregation, who came to the Tabernacle solely for the purpose of being himself instructed, should be set up on high on Zion to teach the assembled saints that which he did not understand himself; anyway, not as a preacher should; and it was harder still on those before him to be called upon to listen to one so unlearned as himself; and he did think it was not for the good, or for the credit of the latter-day saints that their doctrines should be set forth by any chance member, as devoid of eloquence as of knowledge. He guessed this was not the way to raise the Mormon faith in the eyes of Gentile strangers. All other Churches set forth their best and most learned men to preach—only the Mormons had this foolish custom."

This, repeated over and over again in varied words, formed the gist of his "sermon," for half an hour at least, till an impatient Elder sprang up and said he guessed they'd

heard enough of that ; he hadn't much to say himself, but he would just inform the Gentiles present that the special feature of the Mormon faith which set it on high above all others, was its glorious doctrine of "Redemption after death," and "Vicarious Baptism of the dead," by which it was enabled to circumvent the powers of darkness.

Upon this text he harped and shrieked and gesticulated till, happily, the grand organ suddenly pealed forth once more one or two magnificent fugues, splendidly played, after which an anthem well sung by the choir on the platform, and a kind of blessing dispensed by the high priest, brought the proceedings to an end, and the vast crowd dispersed, and we gladly set out in the lovely sunshine and breezy air, through orchards and gardens, for the grand view of city, lake, and mountains to be seen from the heights of Fort Douglas, beautifully laid out with gardens and shrubberies, and garrisoned by United States troops. Then to the Sulphur Springs and a walk on the glittering salt-marsh, a superb sunset lighting up the vast expanse of shining water and silver sand, and back to the hotel for a late dinner, after which, at midnight, to the depot for the long railway trip to San Francisco.

There can be no doubt that the Mormons have done great things for the cultivation and embellishment of Utah, and that as farmers they are excelled by none. Their barley, for brewing purposes, is the finest in the world ; their beet sugar is considered the very best ; cotton, tobacco, and wheat are grown in immense quantity, and the alfalfa crops are unsurpassed. The "alfalfa" (lucerne) strikes its roots so deep into the soil that it can withstand great severity of drought, and produces from three to four crops annually, and all cattle, including horses, eat it with delight and with the best result.



CAPITOL SACRAMENTO. P. 61.

It was a pity to miss, in the darkness, the fine views along the salt lake, but time pressed ; at Ogden we changed trains, and had to fly from one car to another, which we only did just as the bell was beginning to toll. Happily, in America, the " baggage " looks after itself, and always safely turns up at its destination.

When the day dawned we found ourselves in the "American desert," a desolate and arid stretch of sand, the dust of which nearly chokes you, but which only requires irrigation to be made fertile, as proved by numerous "oases" producing fine crops.

On we went, all through Monday, having meals on board, over grand mountains, through snow-sheds guarding the line against avalanches, with lovely glimpses of far-away hill and dale, past several towns and, at most of the depots, saw our first sight of Indians, with long lank hair and hideous features, most unattractive ; with their squaws and papooses—the dregs of the once noble "braves." Through cañons with rushing rivers, alkali plains with no vegetation except sage brush ; over the ridge, at last, of the Sierra Nevada into California; on and on, all Monday night, and in the early dawn of Tuesday found ourselves speeding through an enchanted garden ! lovely orange groves and roses and great palms ; past Sacramento City, across the straits of Carquinez, crossed by means of the entire train—divided into two portions, side by side—being shipped on to the hugest ferry-boat in the world ; past "the great university of California," to Oakland Mole, stretching a mile and a half into the lovely bay of San Francisco, with its picturesque islands and far-famed Golden Gate into the Pacific Ocean.

CHAPTER VII.

California—San Francisco—Monterey—Del Monte.

AT the Mole we left the train and steamed across, in a luxurious ferry-boat, the four miles to "'Frisco," as they call the city, to save time, where we landed and drove as fast as we could to the Palace Hotel, comfortable and magnificent, where we had breakfast, and then flew out on a tour of discovery.

By cable car, up and down almost perpendicular streets, all bordered by lovely palms, eucalyptus, and locust trees ; every house with its wide veranda covered with fragrant creepers in bloom, all basking in the golden sunshine ; to the exquisitely-kept Golden-gate Park with its grand conservatories and lovely views, covering an area of more than 1,000 acres, admirably laid out with greenest turf and planted with every description of rare and beautiful shrub and tree and gorgeous flower beds.

As soon as we could tear ourselves from the loveliness and innumerable walks and points of interest in the Park, we went on by the Ocean-beach Railway, to the magnificent Sutro Heights, crowned with enchanting gardens and shrubberies, overhanging the wide ocean, with its glorious lines of huge breaking waves thundering against the "Seal rocks" and beetling cliffs far below.

A handsome villa stands high in the grounds, wreathed with brilliant flowers and creepers. The garden is simply

an Eden ! every imaginable delicate and lovely fern, bamboo and palm, flowers of every hue and fragrance, flowering and sweet-scented shrubs, mandarin and lemon trees with their charming pale-green foliage—over it all the deep blue sky and vivid golden sunshine. No plague of flies, but bright-winged butterflies and “murmur of innumerable bees” and fairy humming-birds. Verily an earthly paradise!

After simply revelling in all this enchanting beauty, inexorably-passing Time forced us away, and we descended to the Cliff-House, halfway below, whence you look upon the rocky islets on which for ever disport themselves hundreds of sea-lions, whose safety is insured by law, and whose loud and croaking voices never for an instant cease from troubling the harmony of the deep thunder of the waves.

On we went, to the gigantic sea-bathing establishment; a huge crystal palace built by the owner of the Sutro Heights, where the enormous Mammoth Swimming-bath is surrounded by miles of beautiful marble promenades (all under glass) bordered by masses of huge palms and exotics; concerts are given, and thousands of listeners have the additional pleasure and amusement of watching the gambols of the bathers and swimmers.

After climbing to the top of a flowery hill whence the beauty of the whole surrounding country and ocean is magnificently seen, we entered once more the prosaic railway-car, which was to take us back to the city, by the cliffs overhanging the south side of the Golden Gate, a series of splendid views of the bay and mountainous coast beyond, all “golden” in the rays of the setting sun.

By time we had reached the hotel, darkness had sent in,

and the streets and shops were brilliantly lighted by electricity.

After dinner G. joined an American friend in a visit to Chinatown, the sights and odours of which had been described to me as so very far from celestial that I, perhaps foolishly—for one generally regrets afterwards not having seen all the sights—declined to accompany them, and spent my evening in reading and watching the “guests” in the great “parlor,” and being interviewed by no less than three newspaper reporters, one of them a magnificently dressed young lady, who entertained me for quite half an hour with all the news of the city and histories of all its magnates.

Next morning by 6 a.m. we were out in the fruit market and the great Fruit-store, filled with every imaginable variety of fruit, bottled and tinned for exportation, and visited several very fine shops; then to Nob Hill, where the “Nobs” have built themselves magnificent houses of wood as being better calculated than brick or stone for resistance to the frequent earthquakes; and who delight in spending huge sums, not only on themselves and their own abodes, but also on the beautifying of their city, of which they are enormously proud, as they well may be; and on the erection of splendid buildings for purposes of art and science, education and charity.

After seeing as much as possible of this most interesting and most beautiful city, we returned to the hotel to collect our baggage, and at 2 p.m. started by the South Pacific line for the much-famed Del Monte, near Monterey (the ancient Spanish capital of California) through continuous lovely orange groves, gardens, and orchards; the horizon bordered by the far-away Diablo and Santa Cruz mountains; past the hot sulphur springs



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SEA-LIONS ON SEAL-ROCK—'FRISCO. p. 63.

and mud baths of Santa Margherita, and groups of beautiful trees.

About two hours later we stopped at the depot at Del Monte, and walked up an avenue of flowers bordered by loveliest turf, amidst magnificent specimens of the lovely Monterey pines, and cypresses, cedars, and ilexes, a few minutes' walk to the immense and splendid and most comfortable hotel "Del Monte."

It stands in its own park of 20,000 acres, exquisitely laid out in green terraces leading to a charming little lake, and lawns, and gardens of the most dazzling beauty of gay flowers and sparkling fountains, in one part of which you can study all the strange growths and plants of Arizona and new and old Mexico.

The entire hotel is embowered in sweetest heliotrope, roses, and jasmine, and brilliant flower beds are ranged in front and around. In short, an ideal temporary home; and that evening and the following day sky and sun were glorious beyond words; and in addition, the infinite charm of the sandy ocean beach, only divided from the hotel by half a mile of slight hills, clothed with Monterey pines, on which the thundering boom of the up-rolling surf of the unquiet Pacific never ceases reverberating for one moment. One longs to be there, and early next morning I flew to respond to the irresistible call of the sounding waves.

Steep pine and cedar-clad banks led to undulating sandy-grassy dunes, at the feet of which an interminable line of golden sand stretched on either hand to the distant edges of the bay, the whole softly bathed in glowing sunshine—not a breath of wind; yet, in one long, vast, unbroken line, majestically following one after another, a never-ceasing succession of the most superb and gigantic-

ally mountainous waves I ever saw or could have dreamt of, each in one long, slightly quivering but unbroken, green translucent mass, upreared to an incredible height, curling into crystallized emerald, and melting into clouds of divinest foam, out of which Aphrodite herself should have arisen, falling and rising with a rhythmical, deep-toned, thunderous cadence, as from hidden depths of some mammoth organ !

I tried to sketch, and in three minutes was drenched in the clouds of spray, ice-cold, despite the hot sun ; but, wet or dry, nothing could have torn me away till the tide turned and the glorious waves grew less and retreated ; and I wandered back through the wood to the hotel, just before the hour of three had closed the dining room.

The remainder of the day I passed in delicious wanderings in the lovely grounds, and sketching in the Arizona Garden, where, as the sun sank in a flood of glory, I suddenly discovered that my clothes and sketch book, and the marble bench I sat on, and the ground and trees and plants all round were saturated and streaming with water ! The most extraordinary dew I could ever have dreamt of, and icy-cold.

The sudden, extraordinary alternations of heat and cold on this coast are certainly trying. You glow in burning sunshine and steaming hot air, and suddenly an ice-cold mist creeps up from the sea and blots out the sun, and you congeal into a (so to speak) pillar of ice.

That night a sad thing happened. A millionaire who had just arrived with his wife and son, a fine healthy-looking man, still quite young, and whom we had remarked at dinner as being particularly lively and "jolly," and thoroughly enjoying the delicacies of the menu, was found dead in his bed next morning. Everyone was startled and

shocked, and there was quite a gloom in consequence all the next day, and the negro "helps," who are superstitiously afraid of the dead, could be scarcely got to do anything.

That morning broke with a sea-fog so densely penetrating and veiling everything, that one could only wander out in a mackintosh, hoping that as time advanced the weather might clear, and the temperature, which had become icy, might rise. So, with sketch book in case, I proceeded (G. having started to walk the famous seventeen miles coast drive) in the electric car to Monterey, about a mile and a half distant, and then walked along the bend in the coast to the great cypress grove. It was bitterly cold and drenchingly damp; but lo, after an hour of persevering tramp, in the twinkling of an eye, the fog rolled off, the sky turned blue, and a glorious sun shone forth. All was bright and delicious, and I sat sketching to my heart's content. I walked on afterwards some way, but it was too late to attempt the whole seventeen miles, so I strolled back into the little old town of Monterey, looked at the picturesque old Spanish mission, examined the gigantic bathing establishment and apparatus on the shore, and sauntered back in evening sunshine on the firm golden sands, watching the splendid rollers that, in that bay, by some configuration of its floor or peculiar sweep of the sea, seem to roll up more gigantically and majestically than anywhere I have ever been.

G. returned enchanted with the seventeen miles; and that night, at "dead of night," the poor millionaire was taken away to rest in his prepared mausoleum at San Francisco; and the following morning the coloured "gentlemen" had entirely recovered their spirits.

CHAPTER VIII.

San José—Mount Hamilton—Lick Observatory—Santa Cruz—Redwood Big Trees.

WE decided, instead of going straight to Berenda *en route* to the Yo Semite, to "stop-off" at San José, and make a voyage of homage to the great 36-inch refractor at Mount Hamilton, which is shown to visitors every day except Saturday and Sunday, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

To-day, being Saturday, is the day on which the poor professors are compelled, by law, to devote themselves for three hours, from 7 p.m. till 10, to showing and explaining the telescopes and the stars to any kind of mob of tourists, learned or unlearned (mostly the latter) that chooses to present itself; and this, *every* Saturday throughout the year! Delightful for tourists, but what a loss for science! and trial, and mental wear and tear for the professors, who know that, whilst they are making the Observatory and themselves agreeable, the *one* moment, perhaps, for some vital observation is passing, and may not return for years, perhaps, or during a lifetime! However, as a Yankee said to me when I ventured to make these reflections, "Well, I guess it's what they're paid for, so they've just got to do it." And certainly I ought not to complain, for it gave us the happy opportunity of a supremely interesting experience.

We telegraphed to the Hotel Vendôme at San José to send a carriage to meet us at the San José depot to take us straight to Mount Hamilton, and accordingly, when we arrived at about 4 p.m., we found an open four-wheeled gig, with a pair of good strong grays, waiting to take us up at once.

They had telegraphed to the Observatory that we were coming, and at once we started, full gallop; our driver, a young and smart and very loquacious man, somewhat *brusque*, entertained us with anecdotes of all the professors and their discoveries, and of the countless sightseers he had taken up (he being the son of one of the heads of the coach-agency firm). Suddenly he turned round and said, "Do you think I'm a gentleman?" Of course we said, "Oh yes." "Well, a lady I took up yesterday told me I was not! Fancy that! me not a gentleman! me! me ha, ha!" This he kept repeating and interlarding between his anecdotes the whole way: "I guess I'm more of a gentleman than she of a lady!"

The drive is a perfectly lovely one. For the first few miles the road lies through an exquisitely cultivated valley; then begins the long but easy ascent of the foot-hills of Mount Hamilton, the road being wide and excellent the whole way.

From "Grand-view-house" the whole of the Santa Clara Valley, called the "Garden of California," is seen, with far-away border of blue mountains, the air fresh and delightfully exhilarating, the sky a cloudless blue, and the whole lovely scene lit up by the vividly rosy rays of the declining sun.

Then up hill and down dale, till, just as the sun had set, we reached Smith's Creek Cañon, where we were to spend the night after our return from the "Lick," and

where we now stopped to change horses and dine. This latter ceremony we would gladly have dispensed with, for time was passing, and we were most anxious to get on; but our driver had *his* dinner to get too (at our table—*invariably* in America, on these sort of expeditions, you find yourself, at meals, *vis-à-vis* with your driver), and was resolved not to be hurried; so, as we could not get on without him, we dined also, and patiently awaited his good pleasure.

At last we started, this time in the dark, but with a gloriously clear and “star-spangled” sky, dimly perceiving steep precipices beneath, as we wound round and round the here and there beautifully-wooded heights, and came suddenly nearly into collision with one of the descending “stages” coming galloping down as fast as its six horses could drag it.

This formidable obstacle narrowly but safely passed, not without some strength of diction on the part of our “gentleman,” we found ourselves, at about 8.30, nearing the summit, 4,210 feet high, and presently stopping before a huge pile of buildings, flanked by the mighty dome covering the great “Lick” refracting telescope, the then largest in the world, but now surpassed by the still grander “Yerkes” 40-inch refractor, established in a superb observatory built expressly for it, just across the border-line of Wisconsin, at an altitude of 150 feet above Lake Geneva, 75 miles distant from Chicago, to which city it will be considered to belong.

These monster instruments quite cast the refractors of Europe into the shade, the largest of which is one of 30 inches at Pulkowa in Russia, Greenwich possessing one of 28 inches. But there is some idea of constructing one in Paris for the French Exhibition of 1900, surpassing

in size those of America. But, with every increase in diameter, the enormous difficulties to be overcome in casting the lenses increase and accumulate. Three years of failure after failure went by before M. Fiel's workshops in Paris were able to produce the great circular lenses, 36 inches in diameter, for the Lick refracting telescope; and M. Mantois of Paris, who cast the 40-inch lenses for the "Yerkes" refractor, is said to doubt the possibility of constructing still larger ones in time for the twentieth century exhibition.

We were shown into a comfortable parlour, cheerfully lighted up by a bright log fire, very comforting this bitterly cold night; and a few minutes later were most kindly welcomed by Professor Campbell, whose turn it was that night to preside over the great Lick telescope, to which he at once introduced us. It is placed in a huge building with a dome 75 feet in diameter, opening and shutting to show as much or as little of the sky as required with the most perfect ease. The great 36-inch refractor, with 56-foot tube, and of enormous weight, is equally easily manipulated. Exactly under it, and forming actually part of the iron foundation pier on which the huge telescope is balanced, is the sarcophagus of Mr. Lick, a millionaire merchant of San Francisco, who desired that this great monument of science, presented by him to his country, should also be his own actual tomb. So there he lies, for ever, as he trusts, to be identified with his gift.

Professor Campbell said he was sorry he was unable to-night to ask us to choose any particular star for inspection, the refractor being pointed, as for the last several months, for observation of the planet Mars, which was now the object of their most important investigations.

This I was delighted to hear, as it was just Mars that I wished to talk about and see distinctly.

In the early part of that autumn I had had the great pleasure of meeting, at a Scotch country-house, the celebrated Dr. Huggins and his learned and accomplished wife ; who, as well as the whole company, had been much exercised in mind by a cablegram from New York announcing the discovery by the professors of the Lick Observatory of positive proof of complete absence of atmosphere in Mars.

This seemed so wild an assertion, in view of the distinct evidence on Mars of polar snows, waxing and waning with the changing seasons, spectroscopic evidence, etc., that my astronomical friends came to the conclusion that there must be some mistake in the report, since, however possibly attenuated, some sort of atmosphere there must be.

Consequently I had been most anxious to bring the conversation round to Mars, and to hear, from the professors themselves, the truth or otherwise of the reported dictum.

However, the first thing to do, without loss of precious time, was to examine the magnificent telescope, and listen to Professor Campbell's kind and minute explanation of its component parts ; the movable floor which winds up and down, etc. ; and the next to mount up on to the movable kind of wheeled ladder on which one adjusts one's seat to the requisite height for observation. It takes some little time before the eye gets accustomed : when mine did, I had a grand sight of the beautiful planet, then situated in Taurus, with its circular polar snows, and strange "bottle" seas and continents, and the much-discussed lines that are called "canals." Neither, alas, of the satellites could I see ; these two tiny moons, Phobos and Deimos by name, have only been lately discovered (in 1877, by Professor Hall of Washington, D. C.), and make a complete revolution round

their primary in seven hours one, and thirty hours the other.

Just after I had resigned my place to G., Professor Barnard came in, and although the closing hour (10 p.m.) was nearing, he most kindly said he did not in the least mind going on after the time, and that he would be most delighted to show us as much of the starry heavens as we liked to see, in the smaller telescope, over which that night he held sway.

So when G. had seen enough of Mars (I think he did see one of the satellites), we took leave of Professor Campbell, who could scarcely disguise the joy with which he saw us preparing to depart and leave him in happy possession of his instrument ; the more so as he had some particularly intricate calculations to verify, and the short moment that night for doing so was at hand. I could see that he was nervously agitated, and no wonder ; but his manner was patience and kindness itself.

Professor Barnard, who was delighted to hear from me recent good accounts of his friends, Dr. and Mrs. Huggins, conducted us to the second-sized domed-room, where the smaller telescope was placed ; and showed us, first of all, Jupiter (then situated in Gemini), of whom he did the honours with pride, having himself discovered a small fifth satellite some time previously, in addition to the four known to the astronomical world ever since Galileo discovered them in 1610 by means of the first astronomical telescope ever brought into practical use, although invented some years previously, by whom is not known for certain. The "belts" of the giant planet-sun I could well discern the little (new) moon took some searching, and fearing to trespass on the professor's time, I proposed to give it up. But, no ; Mr. Barnard was kindly determined that both G.

and I should see his discovery, and did not allow either of us to pass on to other objects till we had "spotted" the little satellite distinctly.

We also looked at Aldebaran, Betelgeux, the Pleiades, the beautiful Capella, and several others of the most interesting stars in the neighbourhood, and at Neptune, that far-away planet, revolving round the sun at the enormous distance of 2,700 millions of miles—the most distant, as at present known, of our system, although it is suspected that another, circulating still further in space, may yet be to be found.

It was now, alas! long past ten; but our amiable professor would not hear of our hurrying off straight, and insisted on our returning to warm ourselves (we were all quite frozen) at the comfortable parlour fire before leaving. Here we had a most agreeable and interesting talk, in the course of which the problem of the cablegram was solved, and we understood that although it was true there had been some idea at the Observatory that the atmosphere round Mars was of so extremely attenuated a character as to practically amount to none, or next to none, most of the professors had been of a contrary opinion; and that the report of the supposed discovery had been greatly exaggerated.

Professor Holden is the head of the Lick Observatory, but was entertaining a dinner party, so we did not see him.

With much gratitude for his kindness, we then took leave of Professor Barnard (who has since been transferred to the "Yerkes" Observatory, as head professor) and proceeded to our carriage, the horses of which were tied up in a sheltered corner of the great building. Poor things, they must have been quite frozen, and showed their joy at



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being released by a series of capers and jumps as we went tearing down the hill, at the imminent risk of our necks.

It was grievous not to have seen the grand view from the summit by daylight, but, as we proposed spending the remainder of the night at Smith's Creek, we should see the rest of the descent next morning.

It was the most exquisitely clear night, and fortunately moonless, and I, for one, was much too full of the glamour of the stars to sleep, so I sat up in my neat little room watching their beauty as they passed slowly on in their majestic nightly circle around the Pole ; and at the first tinge of dawn was ready to run down and examine the charming cañon, with its rushing creek and lovely trees, and then to eat an excellent breakfast kindly prepared for us, and one or two other tourists, at that early hour ; at which, I may remark, we ate the *only* good and well-flavoured peaches we ever tasted in California—where peaches are superb to look at, enormous in size, exquisite in bloom and colour, and you think what a feast you are going to have ! Alas for the sad disillusion ! Utterly tasteless and flavourless, without a particle of juice or sweetness, you might just as well eat wool, which, in fact, their interior exactly resembles. We tried them over and over again, all over California, invariably with the same result. The only thing they are good for is bottling (and even in tarts I doubt whether they would be much worth eating) and for dessert “ornaments.” For the latter purpose they are unapproachable, but woe to such as are tempted by their beauty to taste them !

However, the proverbial “exception to every rule” was found here, grown on Mount Hamilton alone—and there, only on one small patch of ground of a peculiar soil. This

was one of the attractions of this most charmingly attractive spot!

At 7.30 a.m. we started, at a good pace; twenty-seven miles of most enchanting drive, back to San José, one of the very loveliest of our tour. Through pastoral scenes of the most exquisite beauty; past ravines thickly banked with vines and flowering shrubs and graceful trees; superb views of the Sierra Nevada and other mountain ranges; distant vistas of plains covered with orange groves stretching away to the far Pacific; and, lighting it all, the glorious Californian sun and sky!

From San José we started at 10.30 a.m. by train for Santa Cruz, a pleasant and picturesque little seaside resort on the Pacific, so blue and tempting that G. could not resist a dip. Many miles of the route thither, bordered by vast orchards of gigantic orange trees, one golden mass of fruit, led through forests of the Redwood Big Trees, far, far more beautiful and striking than even the giant "Sequoias" we were soon to see near the Yo Semite! We hurried away, at about noon, from Santa Cruz, intending to give ourselves as many hours as possible for walking back the five miles through the Redwood forests to the "Big Trees" depot, in the famous "Grove" itself.

At first we followed the road that skirts the cañon of the Santa Cruz river, through a wooded ravine. This, after a time, led down a steep descent to the river, to a ford, across it, to the opposite side—a ford impossible for us, pedestrians! So we patiently retraced our steps till we met a higher road, which we followed till it came to an end, at a small depot of the railway we had come by.

We asked whether there was no road further along that side? "No," was the answer, "but you can walk along the railway track!"

"But shan't we meet a train?" I said.

"No," he answered, "the last, till the late night one, has passed."

So, seeing no other means, we proceeded along the track. This was easy enough for a mile or two, and the views from this elevation were charming, the trees becoming more and more high and grand, with a lovely undergrowth of flowering shrubs and plants. But at last we came to where the valley widened out and the track divided into two separate lines, the more apparently-important of which stretched in a long semicircular curve, about half a mile in length, on trestles about thirty feet high, with (as is always the case in America) no side-edging, or banister, or protection of any sort or kind—merely the one line of rails supported on narrow cross-logs placed on the top of the frail-looking trestles; showing plainly, between their wide openings, the green vale thirty feet beneath, and the rushing river further on!

I tried walking along this for a few yards and then gave it up; the dizzy height and the utter sense of insecurity made it absolutely impossible; besides, the nervous feeling that, perhaps, although no "regular" train was due, a "special" might, by some possibility, suddenly come tearing along! I crept back, supported by holding the end of G.'s umbrella, till we had reached *terra firma*.

Then came the point: should we retrace our steps? or, should we follow the branch railway-track, which went straight on, and looked grass-grown and disused—and where would it take us to? and how should we cross the wide river? However, the only alternative being to retrace our steps to Santa Cruz, we decided to take our chance of this track.

For some distance we went on swimmingly till, what was my dismay to find that it passed, for a space of about fifty yards, over a deep ravine on trestles as high, and as gapingly open to the depths below, as the former !

This time, however, the transit being much shorter, and there being no other possible way of escape, except returning, I summoned all my courage, and taking tight hold of G.'s umbrella, he walking first, after superhuman efforts to conquer giddiness, to our joy we found ourselves, somehow, safe and sound on the other side.

Then joyfully we sped along, till we found ourselves just opposite the magnificent grove inclosing the "Big Trees" depot.

But, alas ! there was still the wide, rushing, foaming river to be crossed ! and how was it to be done ? Bridge there was none, for road there was none. Impossible to ford ! After looking in every direction for help and finding none, at some little distance further up the river, at last, we espied a means of transit—but, what a means ! The river was wide, and there we saw, slung across at a height of about fifteen feet, fixed from high bank to bank, a narrow footway consisting of long, thin, single, narrow planks, attached to each other end by end, with a single rope, of tolerable thickness, stretched as a kind of banister, at a height of about five feet above the plank bridge, but unconnected with it, attached to two "big trees," opposite each other, on each bank of the river !

I must say I simply gasped with terror at the sight ! It made one giddy even to look at it, and how would it ever be possible to even make the attempt ? It seemed not only absolute madness to try, but also a physical impossibility !

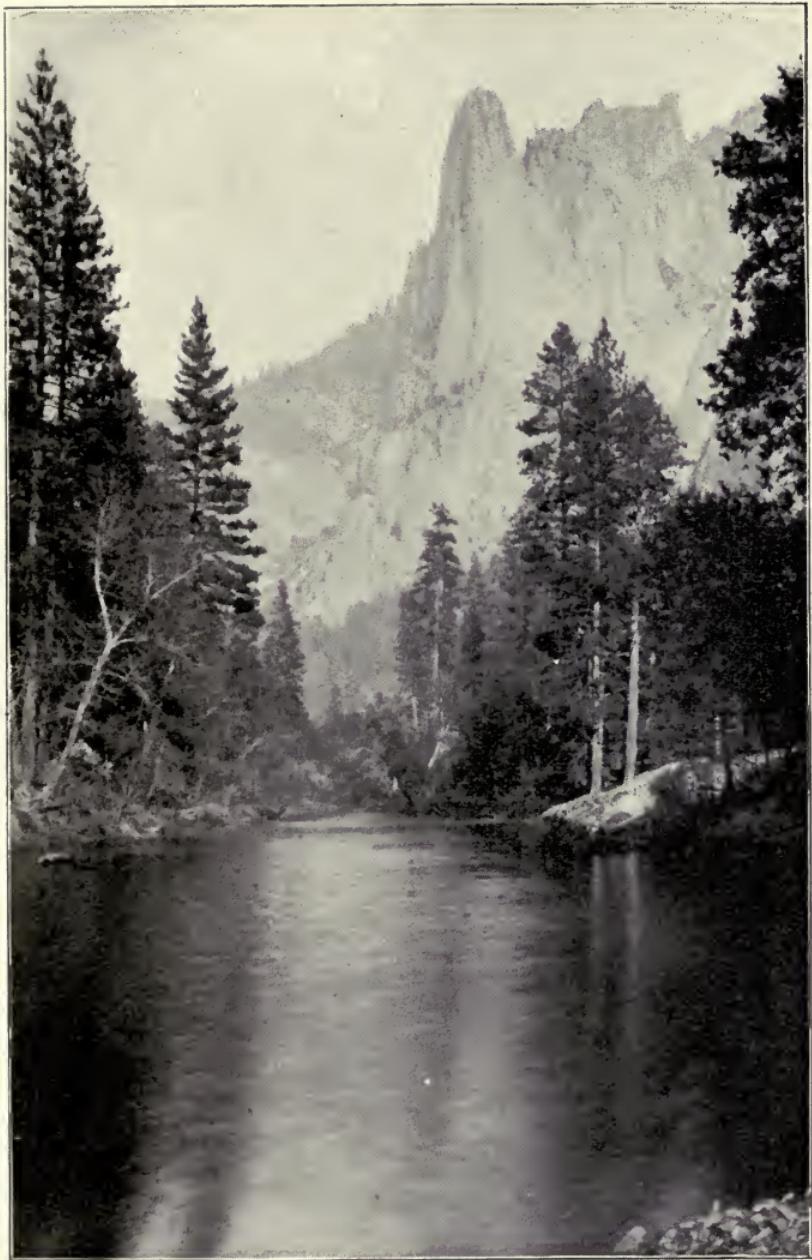
However, there seemed absolutely nothing else to be

done—no other possibility of getting across! The railway trestle-bridge seemed to fade into a joke in comparison with this frail and terrific foot-bridge—but we couldn't go back. So at last I said we would *try!* So we did. No sooner had G. walked on to the plank before me, I holding his hand and the rope and following close behind, than the frail single planking began to bounce violently up and down, although we crept along as slowly and carefully as possible! More dead than alive, I managed to creep dizzily along, with the help of G. and the rope, which itself swung up and down, till about halfway, when I said, “I can't go any further!” Simply, it was impossible! the great height, the deep rushing water below, the thin, narrow crazy plank, its dancing, dizzying motion. It was absolutely terrific! and by way of reassuring, G. ventured to laugh, and said he thought the plank was giving way, and would break under our weight! This really was a little too much, with merely this wretched plank between ourselves and drowning! so I sternly said, “Go on!” and we accordingly moved on, and somehow or other, I don't know how, managed to find ourselves safe on the further bank. Joy! joy! that fearful obstacle passed! Now nothing to do but to delight and revel in the marvel, the wonder, of these most extraordinary trees! The first sight of them, for the giants we had seen in the forest as we came along were mere pygmies compared with these, simply takes your breath away! It feels like an incredible dream! and this variety of the “*Sequoia*” (*Sequoia sempervirens*) is as beautiful as it is indescribably grand. The foliage is a glossy dark green, very like that of the yew in colour and form; the bark is a beautiful rich deep red, as also is the wood, and each tree consists of one magnificent huge central trunk, with immense and most picturesque

red gnarled roots, out of which spring, all round the parent tree, ten or twelve younger smaller trees; that is, smaller as far as diameter of trunk goes, but in height these graceful and numerous off-shoots, as it were, from the roots, soar up into the sky two or three hundred feet, nearly as high as the central parent giant, which varies in diameter from fifteen to thirty feet.

No words can express the beauty, the magnificent grandeur, of this glorious grove! Every single tree in it is a giant, and a giant with its attendant family of young giants, each separate tree consisting of a group of from twelve to fifteen. One of the central parent trees that we measured had a circumference of seventy feet, and others are still larger. Hours and hours one could spend, wandering from tree to tree, or rather, from tree-group to tree-group, through endless groves! Nothing more beautiful or more wonderful could be imagined!

Too soon came the hour for departure: the train arrived towards sunset, the red-gold sun shining through those glorious groves, and we returned, in the fading light, to San José, where we spent the night at the good and comfortable Vendôme Hotel, situated in a beautiful wilderness of trees and flowers.



SENTINEL ROCK, YO SEMITE. P. 91.

3,065 feet from valley.

CHAPTER IX.

Raymond — Awaunee — Wawona — Yo Semite — Inspiration Point.

NEXT morning (October 29th) we started by train at 8 a.m., through lovely and fruitful country, to Berenda, where we changed trains, and waited two rather weary hours, for there was nothing to be seen but a few little houses and a grassy plain; with, in the distance, the fine lines of the Sierra Nevada to redeem it. After this tiresome wait, we went on to Raymond, where we spent the night at a clean, but not very comfortable, hotel.

We had been told that it was getting too late in the year to attempt the Yo Semite, which is supposed to become inaccessible to tourists on account of the snow, the stages ceasing to run, for the winter, after November 1. But, of course, we were determined to try, and on this 30th October morning the sky was cloudless, the air balmy, and the sun, if anything, too hot.

At 6 a.m. we mounted the high, unwieldly "stage" with *char-à-banc* seats, G. in front with the driver, one Tom, a very lively young man, who was, we were told, the cleverest and safest driver in the whole Sierra. Here it is difficult to be the "best," for all the drivers are quite first-rate—very careful, really; but to the inexperienced, or nervous, eye of the "driven," frightfully reckless in their headlong career!

Our fellow passengers consisted of a lady of handsome and imposing presence from San Francisco, *née* Washburn, a family having extensive ramifications in these parts, and appearing to sway the “stages” and routes to the Yo Semite, and most of the hotels.

She and I occupied the seat behind the driver and G., and on the seat behind us was placed the doctor of this district, cousin to the lady. Much political discussion between this personage and Tom enlivened the way. The municipal elections were about to take place, and the doctor, who was a strong democrat, and besides went in for absolute state autonomy and federal secession, or, as an alternative, the division of the states into two great republics, East and West, with the Mississippi for boundary, was by way of canvassing the hills in favour of his views, and was, anyhow, determined that the driver, Tom, who seemed to favour republican views, should be gathered into the fold.

Seeing that the latter after a time turned restive, and said he couldn’t drive and talk too, the doctor devoted his eloquence to G. and me, and made, for our information, a scathing exposition of the “frightful corruption” in every department of the Californian state—that justice was not to be had, every judge and every lawyer being to be bought, and no cause, however transparently just, able to be gained without the help of bribery. This the lady entirely corroborated, but both seemed to think it rather a matter for a joke than otherwise; and were under the impression that it was much the same all the world over, and was a thing to be as merrily as possible endured, being impossible and hopeless of cure.

They next inveighed strongly against all monopolies, especially against the great railway companies—the South

Pacific Company in particular—by which, they said, the whole country was held in bondage, and which appears to be an egregious *bête noire* to every Californian not connected with it.

This seemed to us a great mistake on their part, for most of the development and prosperity of California appears to be owing to this and other companies; the facilities for travel in every direction, the magnificent hotels, attracting visitors from all parts, the opening out of the beauty of the country, the vast bathing establishments, and the rapid rise of towns on every picturesque spot—in short, they seemed to us great public benefactors. But no; the prevailing idea seems to be that they are tyrannical oppressors, riding rough-shod over the public, giving nobody and nothing a chance against the weight of their influence and vast accumulated capital.

The doctor and the lady took a kindly interest in the “old country,” but were possessed with the belief that the present would be the last reign of monarchy in England, which, after its close, would turn into a republic. It was useless to argue to the contrary. It was an *idée fixe* in their heads, and seems to be equally so all over America! They all stick to it, with the assurance that they have “private information” of the highest authority to that effect.

For some miles we passed through lovely green, park-like scenery, with charming clumps of gorgeously-tinted trees and flowering shrubs; manzanita, with its bright red trunks and branches, dogwood, and the beautiful, but deadly, “poison-oak,” a touch of which may very seriously poison you. Everywhere grand extensive views. The road was somewhat dusty, but in very good order, and our four strong horses dragged us along at a good pace.

After a time the scene became wilder and still more grand, the hills higher, and the road edging deep precipitous descents, with sharp and dangerous turns; fourteen miles to Grub Gulch, a small mining camp, where we changed horses, and immediately proceeded.

Finer and finer became the scenery; grand chains of deep blue mountains, exquisitely wooded at the base; smiling valleys, watered by shining streams; and for many miles the view of a raised "flume," a kind of aqueduct, down which float great trunks of trees, closely pushing each other along, and thus conveyed through the mountains to the nearest depot.

Here the roads are less good, and the jolting became tremendous as on we went, at a swinging trot, over plank bridges of the frailest appearance, which creaked ominously beneath our weight, sharp turns, and deep declivities, down and round which Tom invariably urged his horses to a gallop; but in the delicious sunshine and loveliness it was all an absolute delight, the terror, perhaps, enhancing the charm. At one point, however, terror obtained the mastery; for, coming round a sharp point overhanging a precipice of over a thousand feet, what should we see but a huge wagon obstructing the way!

It seemed impossible for the two lumbering vehicles to pass each other, but Tom said he guessed we must try. I declined to remain on the coach during the operation, and indeed Tom proposed that we should all get down. So the lady from 'Frisco and I quickly betook ourselves to a safe position on a high jutting rock, where, however, she bade me beware of rattlesnakes, flat, sunny rocks being their special haunt and delight, the more so if there are roots and fallen trunks of trees near. The sun was pouring its lovely, but very hot, beams upon us, and I prepared to put

up my umbrella, but this my friend would by no means allow, for she said there was just one thing the horses in these parts could not abide, and would not stand, and that was an open umbrella—it made them mad, and they would infallibly make a rush and bite us. This seemed to me too ridiculous, but she stuck to it, so, for the sake of peace, I closed my umbrella, and, broiling, watched the *denouement* of wagon *v.* coach.

After some parleying, the wagon refusing to move from its coign of 'vantage on the safe side of the road, Tom had led our horses and stage to the very verge of the precipice, a foot or so below which was a narrow ledge of rock, from which the rocky wall made one perpendicular line sheer into the dizzy depths below. On this ledge G. and the doctor proceeded to stand, whilst Tom backed the coach till its right-side wheels actually overhung the edge, they all supporting them, till the wagon had slowly lumbered by! after which the stage was quickly pulled forward on to the road, we all re-mounted, and went gaily rumbling on.

The trail now led through endless forests of magnificent pines of many varieties, and at about 1 p.m. we reached the lovely little valley of Awaunee, surrounded by wooded hills, where a charming little inn was prepared with an excellent luncheon, cooked and served by a Chinaman; after which a fresh team took us through dense forest, with occasional vistas of superb mountain chains, scrambling up steep ascents and galloping down, just "shaving" sharp corners over ricketty bridges, waterfalls, and precipices, through never-ending masses of grander and grander trees—here and there one of the famous *Sequoia gigantea* stupendous giants, but nothing to those we were to see later on; many varieties of splendid pines with varied

foliage, and many deciduous trees clothed in autumnal scarlet and gold. Suddenly we heard shouts and yells, and presently, along the winding road in the distance we caught sight of two figures on horseback coming madly tearing along as if pursued by wild Indians, but who turned out to be only ladies from the neighbouring hotel airing their half-wild "bronchos," *à la garçon*, in divided skirts, which the lady from 'Frisco told me was now the universal fashion all over the west, and especially California, being thought much safer. Such a thing as a side-saddle, she said, was now never to be seen. Half an hour later, after passing a colossal and superb "yellow pine," we saw the not unwelcome sight of our resting-place for the night, the Wawona hotel, in the heart of the forest, with fountains and gardens, belonging to Mrs. Washburn, the mother of our fellow traveller.

It was cold at that high elevation, 6,500 feet, and the grand log-fires in an open hall and the two comfortable parlours were by no means to be despised. After supper we were introduced to Mr. Hill, whose pretty and accomplished daughter had married Mr. Washburn *fils*, and who is considered one of the finest landscape-painters in the West, and especially noted for his fine pictures of the Yo Semite. The whole family were very proud of his having been sent for, some years previously, by Princess Louise and Lord Lorne, to show them his paintings at Del Monte, Monterey, where he remained as their guest for several days, and had a delightful time. He offered to show us his studio in a charming little house just across the garden, where we saw not only many excellent paintings, but also quantities of curiosities of the neighbourhood—two huge stuffed bears, the "grizzly" and the "black"—specimens of the two kinds that infest these forests;

skins and rattles of rattlesnakes, trophies of the Yo Semite Valley, where, he said, whilst painting in the wilder parts, he had often seen numbers of these hideous reptiles basking in the sun, curled up on the rocks; but of which he felt not the slightest fear, being always provided with a bottle of whisky, said to be an infallible antidote to the snake poison, provided the whole contents of a bottle can be instantly swallowed; the smallest interval of delay is fatal, and no cauterization or other treatment is of the slightest avail. Fortunately, however, this snake rarely attacks unless trodden upon, or otherwise provoked, and, if you only understand the knack, it is easy to disable it by the slightest cut across the back of the neck with a switch. They are gruesome creatures to look at, and their universal presence all over America is a great drawback to the charm of the country.

Mrs. Washburn *mère*, who is most agreeable and highly cultivated, entertained me, after our return from the studio, with many legendary stories of these wilds, which she has woven into pretty poems, published in San Francisco, of which she kindly gave me copies.

Next morning, at 6 a.m., we started, in a much lighter and more comfortable machine, there being no passengers besides ourselves, with only one pair of horses, driven by another of the family clan who, in years gone by, had been one of the best drivers of the mail-stages across the prairies, in the days when scarcely a journey was got through without an attack by Indians.

When the trains first began to run, the Indians determined to put a stop to them; and, having made choice of a wild and desolate spot, heaped up a vast barricade of trunks of trees over the track, behind which they hid in great force to await the arrival of the one

daily train. In due time they saw it approaching in the distance at full speed, till stopped by the sight of the obstacle.

Instantly they rushed from their hiding-place, yelling their war-whoop, and flew to attack, confident of victory ; but were terribly "sold" by the engine-driver's calmly reversing and steaming away, in a moment, out of pursuit.

This so astonished them, having imagined that the train could only go forward, that they never attacked another.

The road from Wawona continues through the same magnificent forests, opening out occasionally into exquisite vistas of blue mountain, fading into dim distance ; similar sharp turns and crazy bridges ; ups and downs, but always gradually rising, till, about noon, having reached a high eminence, and turned a sharp corner, we suddenly came upon Inspiration Point, our first sight of the wondrous Yo Semite Valley, stretched out beneath us, thousands of feet below, like an emerald-green lake, land-locked.

CHAPTER X.

Yo Semite Valley—Mariposa Big Trees—Fresno.

ON every side, far as eye can reach, distant ridge upon ridge and icy snowfield; high snow-peaks and gigantic bluffs of granite so silvery-white as to give the effect of snow, or purest Carrara marble.

Immediately, and perpendicularly beneath you, deep down 5,000 feet below, hemmed in on all sides by stupendous vertical walls of frowning white granite crags, lies softly nestling an enchanted valley, narrow and long, shut in, in the opposite blue distance, by the misty, snow-clad “Cloud’s rest;” shining fields of snow carrying the eye into the far-away, dim mystery of the horizon.

In the heart of the valley, in deep sunshiny meadows, curving and winding like a serpent of silver, flows the shining Merced river; the bases of the snowy cliffs fringed with dark, solemn pines and feathery poplars of brilliant gold.

Down to this haven of sunny rest the track is dangerous, and the whole steep, winding way overhangs fearful precipices; but fear is hushed in the absorption of the wondrous and ever-increasing beauty.

At last the vale is reached, and looking upward you realize the tremendous and dizzy height of these vertical granite walls, dazzlingly white and smooth in parts, and

rough and rugged in others. Here and there huge, detached masses, like Titans turned to stone ; "cathedral spires" piercing to the skies ; the entire valley one lovely, happy garden, cradled in crags. Groves of dark titanic pines, and the tender grace of delicate shrubs, and graceful trees softly waving their lovely foliage of every imaginable tint of green-gold, scarlet and pink, relieving and illuminating with a triumphant glory of dazzling colour the sternness of the unbending craggy heights ; the whole exquisite scene steeped and bathed in the golden haze of the glowing, radiant noon-tide.

Soon we pass the misty Bridal Veil, shedding its exquisite rainbowy fountains vaguely into the "happy valley," transparent mists of loveliest blue rising to shadow and veil the gaunt protecting walls.

Sweet scents of aromatic shrubs, flowers, and vines fill the air with a pensive joy ; but no words can ever hope to give the faintest notion of the subtle and transcendent beauty and magic charm of this ideal valley of valleys ; the sudden "transfigurations" of divinely-glorious effects of light and colour, and mysterious blue depths of deep shadowy shade ; magic reflections and cadences of melody, and sighings and soughings of the zephyrs in the deep verdure of majestic pines ; and never-ceasing aerial music of innumerable sounding falls and fountains that for ever pour their sparkling showers of sapphires and diamonds into the green vale ; and the stately river, clear as crystal, reflecting and repeating each indescribable beauty and glory of the magic scene ! Loveliness and music too divine and ethereally spiritualized for the clumsy instrument of human speech. . . .

"Tears, idle tears, I know not what they mean,
Tears from the depth of some divine despair . . ."

The winter that would bind the valley in its magic of frost and ice for seven long months, was nearly though invisibly approaching ; and its only dwellings, besides a few Indian wigwams—three or four small hotels, were all closed with the exception of one, the Sentinel, standing in magnificent groves of majestic aromatic pines, shadowed by the huge, towering mass of the Sentinel Rock, the grandest, to my mind, in the whole valley.

Here we alighted, and after a hasty refection, the landlady kindly arrayed me in her absurd balloon-shaped divided skirt, equipped in which, I mounted the “little mule Joe,” having previously declined the services of a fat chestnut pony, recommended as the “gem” of the valley ponies. The guide, no other than our worthy driver from Wawona, mounted a huge snow-white steed, and G. walked. Up a steep and stony trail, first through lovely wooded banks, then open masses of azaleas and fragrant shrubs, till we emerged on bare granite, reaching to the summit of Glacier Point, an altitude of about 4,000 feet above the valley, which itself lies 5,000 above the sea, and there dismounted.

The view magnificent and of immense extent, fraught, so it seemed to me, with a sensation of immense sadness and desolation. The vale below smiling as ever, but you are not so much looking at the valley now as at the range upon range of snowy space above, and you shiver with the cold as you look at those distant, solemn, severe, and frozen realms of an ice-bound world ; field upon field of icy snow, sublime in its desolate grandeur, but cold as the grave ; fraught with solemn and ghostly fascination, as is the cold mystery of death !

Beautiful and grand the views as we descended ; somewhat alarming, too, for my “little mule Joe” had a fancy

for just "shaving" the precipices, and the extreme steepness of the trail was far more apparent in the descent. So I soon found it much pleasanter to walk, leaving Joe to "gang his ain gait"—one sees and enjoys so much better walking. A steep and stony path over craggy boulders took us to an overhanging rock, deep down beneath which we saw the lovely Vernal Falls, which rise in distant snow-fields and descend in joy to the happy valley, singing and dancing in rainbowy streams and clouds of misty foam, their emerald-green, ice-born, crystal waters gathering into the valley as the river Merced.

The sun had set in a dazzling flood of crimson and gold long before we reached the valley, but the glorious Californian after-glow, vivid and beautiful as that of Egypt, still bathed in rose-red radiance the snow-white "dome" and "half-dome," till, in gathering shades of night, and deep shadows of giant pines, and a sudden change of atmosphere from summer warmth to arctic cold, a mile or two of springy turf brought us home to the Sentinel hotel.

An hour or two later the moon sailed radiantly into the starry sky, above the snowy mysterious heights; white vapoury mists, and a new, strange, and ghostly beauty seemed to creep into the valley.

The night was icy-cold, a difference of 40 degrees between night and day!

At 7 next morning (November 1st) we drove in bitter-freezing cold, the valley in sleep and shade, to the "mirror-lake," an exquisitely lovely three miles' distance; the entire length of the valley is only eight miles, and one mile and a half its extremest breadth.

The lake reflected, like a mirror of glass, the grand-dome and half-dome, and the great overhanging cliffs

with their lovely fringe of graceful trees, dazzling in autumnal gold and rose-pinks, the slumberous valley wholly deep in transparent shade: whilst the yet invisible sun was slowly rising in red glory behind the mountains.

At last one single, dazzling beam of sunlight struck the glassy surface, and instantaneously, in the very twinkle of an eye, the mirror was blurred, the whole lovely reflection clean swept away, and in place of the subtly-reflecting glass, sunny rippling wavelets sparkle and dance. The next instant the valley was flooded in golden sunshine, and from arctic frost we were plunged into summer warmth.

The extraordinary rapidity of these sudden changes and effects of shade and light is simply magical.

Warmed and cheered we left this wonderful scene of enchantment, and slowly returned to breakfast at our inn, after which G. set off for the difficult climb to the top of Eagle Peak, whilst I spent the most enchanting of days wandering in the happy valley, treasuring in memory one exquisite scene after another, and the magic effects of glorious light, and shade, and sound not to be heard or seen elsewhere.

To my mind, incomparably the finest effects of the beauty and glory of the Yo Semite are seen from within. The views from the surrounding summits are impressively grand, and infinitely well worth climbing up to—many times, if you have a month or two to remain; but, if only a short time, it should almost *all* be given to the indescribably beautiful and unique poetry of the valley. The mountain-top views may be seen, with more or less of a difference, elsewhere; but the valley is a valley *unique* and alone in all the wide world, a joy and a glory that, like Niagara, must be seen to be believed.

These two—Yo Semite and Niagara—"see them and die!" In an ecstasy of enchantment, one stands beneath the wondrous Yo Semite Falls, the highest in the known world, 2,600 feet. They leap into the valley from near the summit of Eagle's Nest, first in one unbroken fall of 1,500 feet, then in a series of loveliest rippling dancing cascades for 600 feet, then a final perpendicular fall of 400 feet, shrouded and veiled in misty clouds of glittering spray midst waving foliage of loveliest groves.

But the valley is full of exquisite falls, brightening and glistening over its mountain barriers; full, everywhere, of unimagined beauty; a joy of joys to have seen and for ever remember! Sights did I see during that long, delicious day, visions and dreams of beauty and glory scarcely to be thought of as realities!

An ice-cold, frost-bound night again, and glorious warmth and joy with sunrise, and one more delicious morning in the wondrous happy valley.

But, alas! "*tout passe*," though here, never "*tout lasse*," and at 1 p.m. the small "stage" was ready to convey us back to Wawona.

In tears we left the happy valley, lingering long at many points—the Bridal Veil, which Indians will never pass near, for in it, they say, dwells moaning for ever the sad ghost of the maiden-flower of their tribe, lured by the spirit of the falls to leap into the abyss, where sorrow awaits all that linger in passing; past El Capitan, on whose snow-white gigantic precipitous mass is seen the colossal lineaments of a long-ago Indian chief, gone for ever to seek for the loved vision of a pale-faced silver-robed angel one moment seen in the valley, the next flown for ever, on snow-white wings, beyond human ken into the blue empyrean. Winding slowly up the precipitous track,



EL CAPITAN, YO SEMITE. P. 94.

3,300 feet from valley.

Frontispiece.

lingering long at Inspiration Point, our last look; and the valley passed, like a dream, out of sight.

We had lingered so long that the sun had set, and darkness covered the forests long before we reached the "Big Tree." The cold once more became bitter, and the dark night made the sharp turns, and yawning precipices, and narrow track between giant trees as we tore along at full gallop anything but safe; and we were not sorry to reach at last the comfortable warmth and shelter of Wawona.

Next morning, once more warmth and superb weather; and we started early, taking provisions for selves and driver, to spend a long day in the midst of the Mariposa Big Trees. The track is, literally, only a "track," not a road; and the ruts, and deep sand, and great holes over which we banged and bumped at full gallop in a crazy little springless cart are not to be described.

The whole country is one immense primæval forest, in which the *Sequoia gigantea*, these stupendous, gigantic, mammoth trees of old, seem to ask the companionship of mighty megatheriums and mastodons and other giant forest-roamers of yore.

The "grizzly giant," the mightiest of these aged wonders, still puts forth, from the gnarled branches that crown his hoary head, bright, fresh green foliage. Five thousand years and more he is known to have existed, and who shall say how many more æons his green old age may last?

I need not describe what is so well known, the diameters and circumferences of these inconceivably enormous trees (of which the seed-cone is the tiniest of almost any of the fir tribe). Few of them reach a less altitude than 300 feet, or a girth of less than 80 to 90 feet. It takes hours

to adequately see even a few of them, or to realize their enormous and unapproachable superiority in size to anything called a tree in the Old World. Some stand in glorious groups, others pose singly amidst their "pigmy" brethren, that in Europe would themselves be giants. They are clothed with a deep red bark utterly unlike all bark we know of, about two inches deep, a thick depth of innumerable soft velvety fibres, like a deep, soft brush. The wood is a beautiful red, and takes an exquisite polish. The foliage somewhat resembles that of the yew, but is of a brighter green. They stand up, straight as arrows, one huge, gigantic, red, furrowed, soft, fibrous-barked trunk, tapering as they reach their summit—strange "survivals" of those long bygone ages in which "there were giants!"

Many of their branches are fringed with a delicate golden moss, lovely against the soft bark of rich red; and their huge bulk mostly emerges from the sandy and mossy earth like giant Doric pillars, with no outward sign of root. They are, perhaps, more actually stupendously *startling* in their noble giant unity than their brethren of Santa Cruz, the exquisitely beautiful as well as grand *Sequoia sempervirens*, but, in beauty and picturesque effect, inferior—if one may use such a word in speaking of such marvels.

We walked and drove, for miles and miles, all day long, up and up into these endless Sequoia forests, giant after giant, glorious grove after grove, many, alas! scorched and blasted by frequent forest fires; many monsters prostrate on the ground, lying in all their unutterably vast and huge bulk as they fell.

Sketching, and measuring, and wondering, till the scarlet rays of the setting sun, gloriously lighting up the deep red giants, warned us that we were many miles distant from

the sheltering inn, and that, with the shades of night, many "grizzlies" might be roaming their evening "walks abroad."

So we simply galloped home—jolts, and jerks, and bounds, such as no tongue can utter. I clutched G.'s arm, as well as the little rail round the seat, like "grim death," and even so, with difficulty resisted being hurled a thousand times into space!

Long after dark we arrived at our Wawona home, where a good supper renewed our strength sufficiently to enable us to step across the garden to pay a farewell visit to Mr. Hill, and to see again, after having seen them in their glorious reality, his portrayals of the divine Yo Semite.

He congratulated us on having seen the valley during the "fall" of the year, in his opinion the most beautiful season for seeing it. Indeed, as we saw, it could not be surpassed; yet I long to see it again, one day, in the heavenliness of its divine spring beauty!

And all those forests are one mass of azaleas in June, one blaze of colour and sweetness!

We returned to the warm and cozy parlour, where our poetic hostess entertained me with many legends and poetic traditions; whilst sweet sounds of music and song echoed from the further parlour.

More "guests" had arrived; and my friend, the lady from 'Frisco, came to me with an important air: "Do you see that queerly-dressed young man? you wouldn't guess it, but it's the Earl of —!" So it was; but the next morning, at cock-crow, he started on foot for the Yo Semite, regardless of the prognostications of our hosts that snow was imminent, and he would lose his way in deep drifts, and should he ever arrive alive, he would be in-

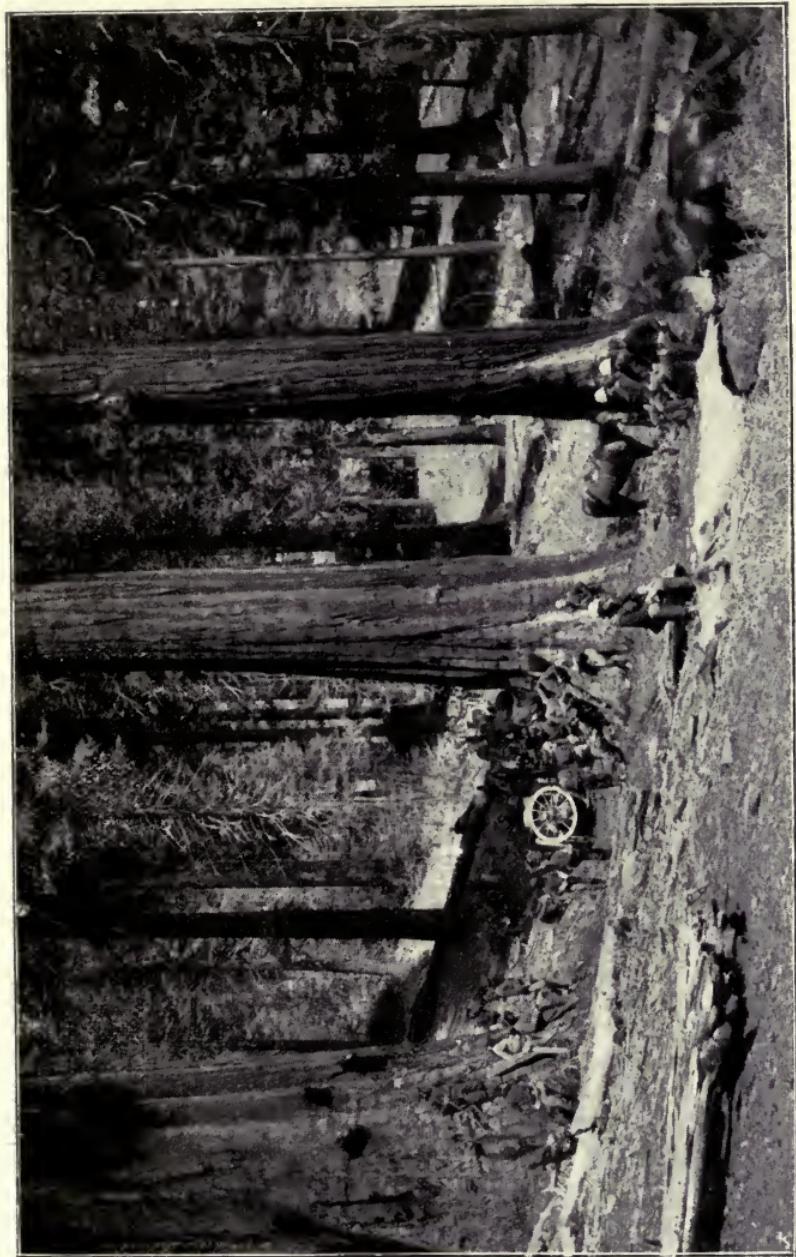
fallibly snowed up in the valley for the whole of the long winter. A worse fate might befall a man! But I believe, although snow did come, he managed to get away in due time.

That morning (Sunday, November 4th) we were to return to Raymond, *en route* to South California; but, during the previous evening, G. was told such tales of numerous bears, "grizzly" and "black," seen lately tramping through the forests, that he could not resist the hope of shooting at least one; so stayed on one day longer. I was, however, possessed with the longing for orange and palm groves, and in addition, somewhat fearful of what the drive back would be should the predicted snow come down, of which there was considerable probability in great black masses of gathering cloud, so decided to start as arranged, leaving G. to follow on Monday.

So, at 7 a.m., I took leave of our amiable hostess, and set out in a charming little kind of victoria, with no "box," drawn by two diminutive ponies.

The weather, apart from the threatening clouds in the horizon, was, in the sunshine, warm and lovely as ever, and the comfortable little carriage—"wagon," they call it—valiantly dragged along by the good little ponies, was most enjoyable through all the grand and lovely scenery. The only *contretemps* was the coming frequently into collision with immense and never-ending herds of cattle and horses being driven by cowboys down from the now snowy mountains where they pasture in the summer, to the warmer plains for the winter—and which rather frightened and annoyed the ponies.

One tiny little calf stupidly managed to run under the pole to which the ponies were harnessed, and struggled there, unable to get out. My driver, who had appeared



MARIPOSA BIG TREES. P. 95.

till now quiet and taciturn, made no attempt to stop or to disengage the unhappy calf, but contented himself with hurling at the poor little animal the most extraordinary string of maledictions and anathemas. At last it managed to crawl out, seemingly unhurt, from its dangerous position, but the anathemas went on for quite twenty minutes, apparently till the end of the repertory was reached—after which, gloomy silence.

I stopped at a hut to buy some seed of the “Sequoia,” which, grown in England (where, however, for some reason they don’t look at all the same), is called “Wellingtonia.” Not to be outdone, the Americans at once christened theirs “Washingtonia,” but finally decided to give them the name of a bygone chief of the Yo Semite Indians, “Sequoia,” by which they are now known.

At Awaunee, the little carriage and ponies were left behind, and after the excellent Chinese luncheon that that charming little inn always provides, a loquacious old man drove me, in a high gig, the remainder of the lovely way to Raymond, which we reached just before sunset, at about 5 30.

There I found our baggage, which we had left, with the exception of a couple of small bags, at the not very delectable hotel, where I stayed the night, as before; and next morning started by train, at 8 a.m.

Fortunately, this time, my train passed through dreary Berenda without changing, straight on to Fresno, through a lovely country of vines and orchards, and rich corn-land, the Sierra Nevada fading into blue distance.

Fresno, the head centre of the great vineyard section of California, is a well-built and very flourishing little city, with broad, tree-shaded streets, and a pretty park, in which stands a very grand city hall. I spent the time most

agreeably in visiting several of the celebrated vineyards in the neighbourhood, in which are raised vast quantities of grapes dried as raisins for exportation ; and walking about in the park and gardens, till alarming sounds of cannonading and firing of musketry terrified me into making the best of my way, through excited crowds, back to the comfortable little inn at the depot, where I was informed that the row was not dangerous, but only in honour of the municipal elections which were to take place next day.

Fresno is the “dinner depot,” with an excellent and very large restaurant, to which the principal inhabitants of the city seem “*abonnés*” for their meals. Every table simply groaned under the weight of grapes—huge, enormous bunches, perfectly delicious in flavour, unlike some varieties of Californian grapes.

The object being to advertise the vine-growing capacity of the country, every passenger was pressed to eat as many grapes as possible, gratis ; and when I left I was presented with a huge basket, almost too heavy to carry, full of this delicious fruit.

This country is admirably irrigated, with water conveyed in canals from the inexhaustible supply in the mountains.

I went on by the 6 p.m. train, so fearfully crowded that I was compelled to take refuge in my pet abhorrence, the “sleeper,” and at 7.30 next morning arrived at Los Angeles, through exquisite groves of oranges and lemons, peaches and mulberries—great quantities of the latter for the purposes of silkworm culture, which is now one of the most lucrative industries of California.

CHAPTER XI.

Los Angeles—Santa Monica—Pasadena—Echo Mountain—San Diego—El Paso del Norte.

I WENT straight to the Hotel Westminster, large and exceedingly comfortable, for breakfast, after which I proceeded to reconnoitre the town. Wide shady streets, fine stone buildings, and a series of the most charming wooden villas, each rejoicing in the loveliest of gardens full of palm trees, bananas, delicate-green lemon trees (orange trees are thought too common for these dainty gardens), myrtles, roses, and masses of brilliant and gorgeous flowers—a sky of deepest blue, and a sun simply an ecstasy to feel!

The city is surrounded by interminable groves of huge orange trees, laid out in long rows, one sunshiny mass of golden fruit—in the distance lovely lines of deep blue hills. It boasts six beautiful parks and two theatres.

After luncheon I went by train to Santa Monica, the whole way through a valley of the most exquisite gardens and groves of every imaginable fruit tree, all so covered and loaded with fruit that one wondered how the branches could sustain such weight, especially the enormous "grapefruit," or pomelo, of which you often see from forty to fifty hanging on one small delicate-looking branch. Sparkling streams irrigate this lovely valley, which is bordered by low, but most graceful hills.

In less than an hour the blue Pacific came into sight,

and we arrived at the pretty little sea-bathing town of Santa Monica, picturesquely perched on cliffs with brilliant gardens, and in front the wonderful golden sands that everywhere stretch along this coast, up which come rolling emerald-green waves breaking into lovely clouds of snowy foam. Sea-bathing here, as everywhere in these favoured climes, goes on the whole year round.

The train runs on straight for a mile or two, on to a huge "mole" which projects a long distance into the sea, whence daily steamers start for various points of the coast. After an hour's enjoyment of the sunny sea and delicious breeze, I returned by train to Santa Monica, where it was enchanting to wander along the sands, hard and firm as a board, picking up exquisite shells and watching the great shining green waves. But all at once, without the slightest warning, waves, sea, and cliffs were absolutely obliterated from sight by the densest and wettest of sea-fogs.

I always carry a waterproof which also does duty as dust-cloak, else I should have been wet through ! I hurried up to the charming little hotel on the top of the cliff as well as I could, for sight of it there was none. All was shrouded in mist, with a sudden fall of temperature.

When I reached the summit of the not high cliff, lo ! there was warmth, and brilliant sunshine, and clear blue sky all over the land, whilst sea, and the sky above it, were absolutely blotted out by dense, rolling clouds of vapour !

I was told that consumption, resulting from neglected colds, was very prevalent here, and no wonder, with these sudden and violent changes of temperature ; one moment you are inhaling the warmest and driest of airs, the next the coldest and dampest of vapours !

I never heard anywhere such incessant and racking

coughing as everywhere in the trains and hotels of California!

As a rule, however, these sea-fogs do not penetrate far into the country, but rest mostly on the sea-board.

My train reached Los Angeles a little after sunset, the whole landscape and sky glowing and flaming in a marvellous afterglow, which reminded me of the exquisite sunset effects at Athens, and all over the plains of Attica, where they are so infinitely more beautiful and brilliant than in any other part of Greece.

Next morning, cloudless sunshine. G. arrived by the early train, his extra day at Wawona not having gifted him with the proud possession of a bearskin, no "grizzly" or other monster having been encountered. He went off to look at some fruit-farms, and I by train, a short distance, to the far-famed Pasadena, through one vast orange and lemon garden, rising gradually to a height of 800 feet, on which lies the rich valley of San Gabriel, where the orange trees grow to a phenomenal height, and their fruit is of exquisite flavour.

Beyond this lovely and fruitful valley rises the grand Sierra Madre and the peaks of San Bernardino and San Jacinto, clad in dazzling snow.

The magnificent Raymond Hotel at Pasadena was closed for the winter, but I was able to see its beautiful and extensive and admirably laid-out grounds, surrounded by glorious views,—the blue Pacific in the distance.

The town of Pasadena is full of gay villas embowered in flowers, handsome public buildings, and an interesting museum. Beautiful woods of eucalyptus, cork, and pepper trees, olive and indiarubber, fan and date palms, fruit trees of all description, and flowers of brilliant hues. Whole tracts are covered with the golden Californian

poppy, and a large ostrich farm full of these queer, ungainly birds, is most successful and valuable.

At 2 p.m. I went on from Pasadena, by ordinary train, as far as Altadena, passing through glorious orange and lemon groves, which here culminate in magnificent luxuriance. At the little flowery station of Altadena you change into the electric cars of the Mount Lowe Railway, and rise rapidly into wilder but not less charming scenery. Sweet-scented groves, the orange trees simply gigantic in size, delicious vine-clad ravines with brawling brooklets tumbling in sparkling cascades, every inch of ground covered with the dazzling golden poppy, till Rubio Cañon is reached, at an altitude of 2,200 feet.

Its steep sides are covered with splendid pine and eucalyptus trees, through which a shining waterfall comes splashing and glittering, in the checkered sunlight, to where a pretty little inn stands on the platform, where you leave the electric car, and see before you, rising straight up the apparently perpendicular mountain, the impossible-looking Great Cable Incline, with its two queer-shaped lumpy cars, which swing each other up and down, a nearly vertical height of 1,300 feet to the summit of Echo Mountain, which stands at an altitude of 3,500 feet.

In a few minutes we were all seated (about twelve can go up at once) in the open car, beginning our upward ascent, our strong cables drawn slowly up by those attached to the descending car, the downward action of which drew us up. I must admit that the sensation of climbing up this almost perpendicular precipice of 1,300 feet is not entirely unmixed. The motion is perfectly smooth and easy, but the strong cables groan and creak with a crunching noise, and make you realize your utter dependence on

their strength, for should, by chance, the strain of the great weight they drag cause them to snap, down you would plunge, with fearful impetus, into the giddy depths below!

But the views are superb!

After a "nerve-test" of about ten minutes, the summit is reached, and you find yourself on a narrow platform, one shining mass of the most gorgeous flowers; a charming little hotel almost hidden in blossoming creepers, where it would be delightful to spend a week exploring the exquisite mountain scenery. Close by stands an observatory, containing a 16-inch refractor and two smaller telescopes, and beyond it an establishment of cages, in which terrible creatures of the mountains are kept. Many hideous varieties of live rattlesnakes and other reptiles, a huge black bear living in a sort of sunk well, which deliberately and noiselessly climbs up to where you stand, and could without much difficulty take hold of you, or get away himself, which the keeper told me he had done twice already; numbers of frightful and ferocious-looking tiger-cats, glaring and hissing and snarling at you, and other horrors from which you are glad to turn to look at the magnificent panorama before you.

At the back, great mountain peaks, snow-clad and glittering; all round you the dazzling flower beds; in front, the steep and yawning precipice; grand trees beyond, and the glorious valley, emerald-green and golden with fruit-laden orange groves, shining mists floating here and there over its beauty, stretching far away to the golden sands of the distant ocean studded with lovely blue islets, all glowing in the dreamy noontide sunshine, a scene of perfectly enchanting beauty!

I made a little sketch, and then started, on a stout pony, to ride up, through indescribably beautiful scenery, to the

summit of Mount Lowe, a height of 6,000 feet. From this point the view is infinitely grand! Fourteen snow-clad ranges of exquisite form are seen towering one above another, humming birds hum around, sipping the fragrant honey from a carpet of flowers, sparkling waterfalls and brooks refresh the air, and swarming bees, the honey of which is exquisite.

The bridle-path is ingeniously arranged in the form of an 8, so that you are all the time passing through new ground, and the return is through shady woods of pine and oak, carpeted with flowers of the sweetest fragrance all the way back to Echo Mountain, so-called from its extraordinary acoustic effects, just in time for the last evening trip of the Cable Incline down to Rubio Cañon, the whole superb panorama illuminated by a glorious sunset, and a still more wonderful afterglow, scarcely faded when I reached Los Angeles.

The following morning (November 8th) G. started early to make, by train, the round of the famous Riverside, "claimed," as the Americans say, to be the finest fruit-growing tract of land in the world. But I preferred the expedition to San Diego, renowned as the loveliest seaside resort in all the west.

I started early also, by another railway, a journey of about five hours, through the usual Californian succession of Gardens of Paradise,—the horizon, on one side, bounded by the gleaming snowfields and peaks and blue-shadowed foothills of the lovely Sierra Madre, and on the other by the sparkling, deep blue ocean. The train passes not very far from the charming home of Madame Modjeska, whose histrionic powers were much admired in London many years ago, and who now resides always in this beautiful "Garden of Eden."

Her picturesque, castellated, flower-embosomed house, perched high on a craggy rock surrounded at its base with small forests of trees in all the gorgeous tints of the Fall, overlooks miles upon miles of orange and palm groves, as far as the yellow sands of the ocean, the opposite horizon bounded in the transparent far-away distance by the blue Sierra—a home of ideal poetry !

After the first hour through these exquisite regions, the track reaches the sea, and curving round, for the remainder of the way skirts the sunlit waves from lovely pastoral heights of the vividest emerald green. Then descending, crosses the broad San Gabriel river, passing romantic hamlets nestling in happy groves and gardens, feathering down the opening in the green hills to the sunny waves dancing merrily up the strand.

Santa Fé Springs, a delicious village ! On we go, across the river Santa Anna, richly fringed with orange groves, till, at last, the prosperous and important city of San Diego is reached. There the line terminates, a ferry-boat waiting to cross the grand harbour, second only to that of San Frisco, to the outer arm of the bay, formed by a long tongue of land called Coronado Beach.

This is what I had come to see—the attractive boast of San Diego, and all California.

It is, to my mind, almost, if not quite, of its kind, the most delicious spot on earth—a dreamland of poetic delight !

Leaving the ferry-boat, you mount into a carriage or an electric car, and you find yourself speeding along a flat peninsula, through a quadruple avenue of the most magnificent and graceful date and sago palms, on a broad and admirably kept road, edged with loveliest turf and flower-beds of dazzling hue ; and on each side, beyond the palms,

an exquisite fringe of tall golden poplars, locust trees and eucalyptus, sheltering a heavenly wilderness of scented mandarin-orange and lemon trees, bananas and bamboos, every imaginable delicious fruit tree, and sweet and brilliant flowering shrub and plant—in short, a veritable Garden of Paradise !

Here the sun for ever shines, and the air is always balmy and scented with million scents of flowers, and no sea-fog ever dims the radiance of the waves !

For several miles through all this beauty you advance, till you reach the most exquisitely situated hotel in the world !

It stands embowered in the heavenliest of gardens ; the walls and broad glassy verandas almost hidden by the vast clinging masses of roses of every delicate and brilliant hue, heliotrope, jasmine, of a fragrance and beauty beyond words !—the whole, a sort of gigantic presentment of glass and flowers. You pass round to the opposite side of the hotel, and find yourself suddenly face to face with the Grand Pacific, rolling its emerald-green crystal waves in snow-white foam masses up the gold-amber, shell-strewn Coronado Beach, from which you are only divided by a wide marble terrace on to which the flowery verandas open, and from which wide flights of marble stairs lead down to the sunny sands stretching far to right and left.

It is a vision of delicious flowery, reposeful peace and beauty ! and though sea-fogs may sometimes be seen floating in the distance far out at sea, they never come near this enchanted spot, where blissful sunshine and perpetual summer reign.

Alas for fleeting time ! Soon I had to return to the ferry across the bay to meet the homeward train—the

green-blue foaming billows, as we skirted the sands, indescribably lovely in sunset and fiery afterglow.

Just before daybreak next morning (November 9th) we left Los Angeles, by the South Pacific line, for El Paso, passing through the lovely "riverside" country, considered, *par excellence*, the garden of California—but *all* California is one wide "Garden of the Hesperides!" Through lovely woods gorgeously tinted, grand chains of mountains running parallel on each side of the valley; by degrees the land becoming arid, still in California, but where no irrigation is.

Cactus, of varied kinds, some gigantically tall, of every eccentric shape, covered with fruit and flower, mingled with yuccas of immense height.

On, into still more arid land, cactus only, and yellow mountains completely bare, glowing like burnished copper in the fiery sun. Scorching dust-waves, choking and penetrating—still California. The track descends to a depth of 20 feet below sea-level; and for 150 miles we speed through the burning Colorado desert, a vast deep basin, 265 feet below sea-level in its deepest parts, supposed to have once formed part of the Gulf of California, and to have gradually dried up, leaving immense deposits of salt, glittering like silver and diamonds in the burning sunshine, relieved here and there by yuccas and cacti, many of them rising to a height of 40 feet.

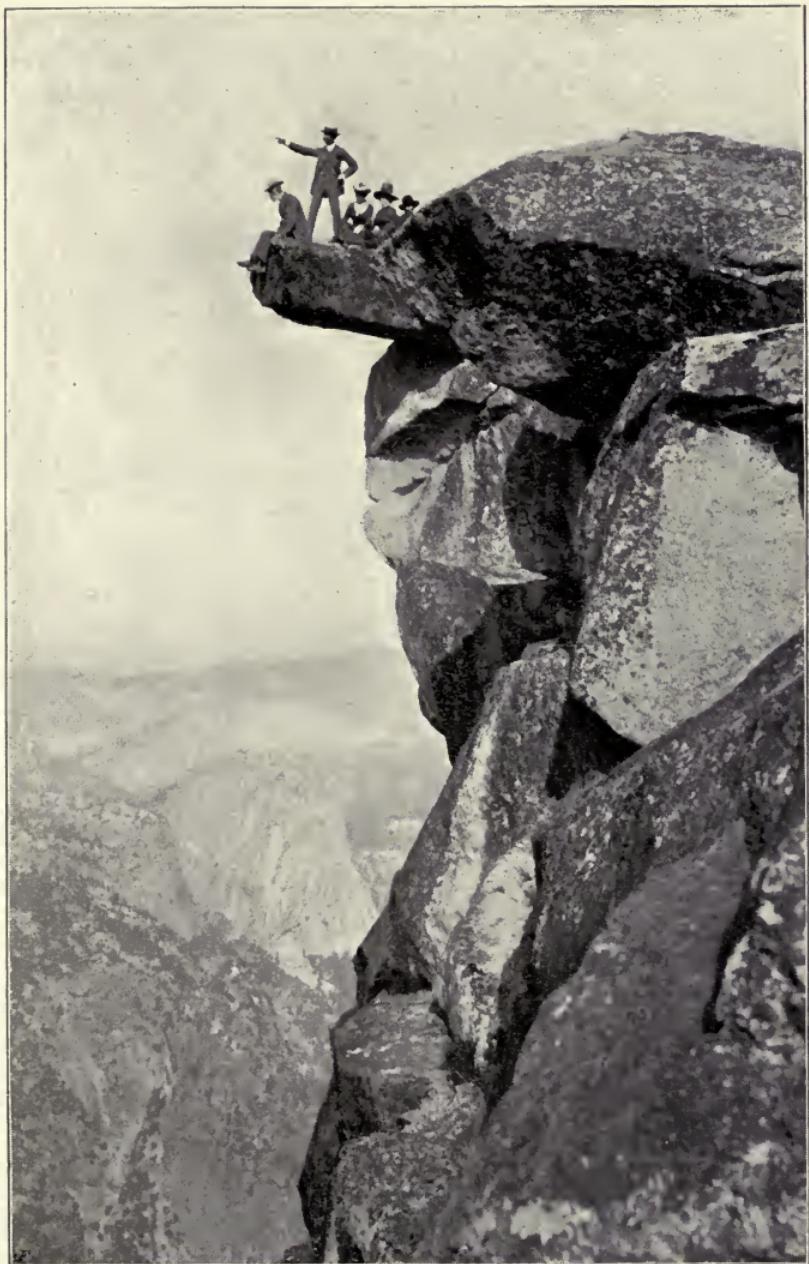
The sun shines down into this deep and arid depression with a fiery glow, the dust rising in clouds. Here and there an oasis. Palm Springs, the loveliest of them, revels in the green shade of exquisite groves of date-palms, the only natural growth of this variety in California. Near Salton, at the lowest depth (265 feet below sea) a lake 30 miles long by 10 wide, and only 4 feet

deep, has been formed by the river Colorado, so lately as 1891. What a paradise for skaters! were it not in torrid zone! Soon after, at a depth of 220 feet, we pass Volcano Springs, admirably curative, and begin to rise till Flowing Well, 5 feet above sea.

Soon the great "Colorado" river is reached and crossed, its banks beautifully fertile and fringed with golden poplars, forming the eastern boundary of California, where we looked on/last (I trust not for ever!) on that lovely land, where, the whole year round, you can eat freshly-gathered oranges, lemons, limes, strawberries, guavas; and for a lesser portion, innumerable other delicious fruits! The town of Yuma, said to be the hottest in America, rises on the further bank of the Colorado, and we now found ourselves in the strange and arid, but most picturesque and interesting state of Arizona, in which are to be seen many "world's wonders," the extraordinary Petrified Forest, the trees of which hide behind their stony bark, instead of wood, wonderful deposits of crystalline amethyst, jasper and cornelian! Many sections of these petrified trunks, exquisitely polished, and looking like slices from fairy trees of precious stone, I saw later in museums, where other marvels of Arizona dazzle the beholder with their beauty; the cave-dwellings also, and wonderful remains of prehistoric cities.

In the sandy wastes mirages are of frequent occurrence; all is arid sand, but full of strange, uncanny growths of gigantic, eccentric cacti; great, bare, sun-baked parallel chains of finely peaked hills.

When night came on, we were so lucky as to be almost alone, and consequently able to remain in the ordinary car all night. In the dim light of the stars we could see the strange vegetation seeming to loom to the skies! In the



GLACIER POINT, YO SEMITE. P. 71.

3,201 feet from valley.

morning we stopped for breakfast at a depot restaurant, then on again, through a boundless stretch of bare, undulating country, majestic in its desolation, the soil a rich red-purple; with, in the far distant horizon, a superbly shaped, pyramid-like, snow-peaked mountain rising over 10,000 feet from the plain.

For hours it remained in sight, dominating the plain, till, after a long time, we reached the wide Rio Grande, its course marked by waving lines of gold-foliaged trees, and crossed into Texas, the state of greatest extent in the whole Union, covering an expanse greater than that of France.

We were, however, at present, to see but little of it, for we had reached El Paso, where we left the Southern Pacific line, and, crossing the short distance to El Paso del Norte, found ourselves in Mexico.

CHAPTER XII.

Mexico—Chihuahua—Bull-fight—Zacatécas—Aguas Calientes—Tajo di Nochistonga—Silao—Valley of Mexico.

THE hour was 2 p.m. (Saturday, November 10th) a gloriously beautiful day; a pretty little “puebla” (village) and the Custom-house, where we found our luggage already deposited for examination. Here we met with the greatest possible civility. The Mexican-Spanish officials were politeness itself—Spanish the only language spoken.

I was shown into a separate hall, where a very smartly-dressed lady presided over the examination of women’s boxes, no man being admitted.

In answer to her polite inquiries, I said I had nothing “to declare.” She just glanced at the top without moving a thing, and with the politest bow and smile, chalked everything “passed.” I found that G.’s men-examiners had been equally complaisant, so we got away in about two minutes, and had two hours to walk about and make our first delightful acquaintance with things Mexican.

At once the extraordinary difference between the two countries strikes the stranger. It is as if one were transported into a distant land, the whole look of everything is different. The houses are altogether different, mostly built of adobe, and flat-roofed; whilst the churches everywhere, however small, present the solid fortress-like appearance that you see in Spain.



CATHEDRAL SAN LUIS-POTOSI. P. 221.

The population is picturesque; even the loafers at the "estacion" have all the picturesque grace that delights one in the Spanish peasantry—handsome, dark-eyed men dressed in short open jackets and gay waistbands of bright-coloured stuff, or embroidered leather, and tight, much-decorated, leather leg-coverings, the whole surmounted by the huge and most artistic "sombrero,"—a straw hat, with immense brim and enormously high peak, often gaily embroidered and decorated; but, whether plain or not, the most charming and becoming of headgear, and the best adapted for the hot sun of these regions.

The women, in dark plain skirts, just avoiding the ground, with lace mantillas, or black or coloured shawls, of fine texture, gracefully draped over their heads and shoulders; sounds of guitars; an atmosphere of romance; the grand Spanish language, spoken here with the *doucereux* softness of Italian, rather than Spanish pronunciation—so infinitely soothing after Yankee-English!

Everywhere refined politeness and courtesy; for, even the Mexican who, on provocation of hunger and want, and meeting you in a solitary place, would not for a moment hesitate at such a trifle as cutting your throat to possess himself of your supposed money-bags—would treat you, till the last tragic moment, with the most polite and respectful deference.

No longer rush and turmoil, and everlasting "dollar-talk," but calm, quiet, and repose, where time is of no account, and you may live and let live, and dream through the livelong day!

At 5 p.m. "aboard" the Mexican-Central, the leading line in Mexico, admirably managed by an English company.

Here we found, for the first time on the American

continent, first and second class, besides the "Pullman sleepers."

The first class is a car constructed on the same principle as the American "all-class"—a gangway between arm-chair or sofa-seats, but very much shorter and more comfortable, and, of course, more select.

We gladly settled ourselves in our comfortable "first class," without fear of being forced, by unpleasant crush or company, into the sleeper.

At 4 p.m. we start, from a height we have been gradually ascending, of nearly 3,000 feet, having left the arid zone behind. Extensive ranches on grassy lands excellent for the rearing of cattle and horses, of which vast herds are seen peacefully grazing; here and there picturesquely-dressed cowboys, mounted on handsome, well-fed horses, which they dominate from their high Mexican saddles, armed with gigantic spurs, are seen wandering about. Immense flocks of goats quietly browse the deep rich grass, principal providers of milk in Mexico.

A lovely sunset closed the day, but not in the least like the Californian, being followed by no gorgeous "afterglow." Indeed, "afterglow," in the sense of those that so marvellously illuminate the skies of California, we never saw in Mexico, where the skies and sunsets are more like those of the clearest and loveliest of English summer days; the air pure and balmy, and delightfully exhilarating, but nowhere extreme heat, in spite of the brilliant sun, except in the narrow coast-bands of "tierra caliente" (hot land).

The line continues, gently rising, through boundless fertile plains, but darkness soon followed the sunset, and we saw little more in the dim starlight, besides being more or less asleep, till the early morning light showed again

much the same kind of country, with graceful blue hill ranges in the distance on either side, as, towards 7 a.m., we reached Chihuahua, the chief city of the Mexican State of that name.

It was a lovely cloudless morning, the "Sabbath morning," and we at once betook ourselves to the "casa Robinson," to make something more of a "Sunday toilette," and to breakfast.

The "casa" is a large and airy whitewashed house, with, as in all Mexican dwellings, a central "patio" (court), planted with oleanders and orange trees, into which the various rooms open. Of course, after the wonderful hotels of the United States, the Mexican "fondas," like those of Spain, fall short; but the rooms all shone with clean fresh whitewash, and an entire absence of disagreeable insect life; the wooden floors were perfectly well scrubbed; here and there rocked a chair, and the food was quite clean and eatable—the bread and chocolate, as in Spain, superlatively good.

After breakfast we walked through very clean streets of whitewashed flat-roofed houses, shaded by rows of poplars, to the cathedral, for the high mass, where we saw a most picturesque crowd, the same sort of gaily-dressed men with their "rebosos" (toga-like mantles) and pretty children and women, gracefully dressed in shawls or mantillas, that you see in Spain; the same absence of seats of any kind, the same scrupulous and perfect cleanliness, the same antique-sounding, cracked organs, and short Spanish sermon. The cathedral itself is spacious and picturesque; it was built during the Spanish occupation, at the beginning of the last century, at a cost of 800,000 dollars, raised by a tax on the neighbouring Santa Eulalia silver mines.

After mass, we wandered in the lovely sunshine, through

the prettily-situated city, with its fine park and gardens, full of oranges and myrtles, roses and palms, bordered with fine eucalyptus and many other trees—to the mineral baths, and a grand Spanish aqueduct, more than 200 years old, just outside the city walls, with lovely views, and the Guadalupe shrine.

Then we returned in delicious, but not too hot, sunshine to the “casa,” where we dined—the usual kind of lesser Mexican food, which, however, I thought superior to the Spanish of the same grade, being happily innocent of garlic; after which, having arrayed myself in a black lace mantilla and fan “á la española,” we proceeded through the charming and extensive park to the Plaza de Toros, where a “funcion” takes place every Sunday afternoon.

This we thought a quite necessary experience—a comparison of Mexican bull-fights with Spanish—not that we expected to enjoy ourselves, but wished to see the appearance and behaviour of a great popular Mexican gathering.

At 4.30 p.m. the great gates of the amphitheatre opened, and we at once went up to our reserved places, in the gallery in which the élite of Chihuahua disports itself on comfortable chairs, overlooking the tiers of benches, all round the arena, on which the populace sat, dressed in its best, very gay and lively.

An excellent military band played stirring music, and the numerous company of picadores on their doomed blindfolded horses, bandarilleros, toreadores, lasso-men in case of accident, and also to drag away the victims, with their team of six splendidly-caparisoned, prancing horses, and finally, two celebrated matadores, who only appear in the arena when the *coup-de-grace* is required—all dressed in their gay and most picturesque bull-fighter’s costume—

marched, to the accompaniment of spirited music, into the arena, and three times round it, vociferously cheered by the crowded assembly, after which the matadores retired, and proceedings began.

Six superb bulls performed one after another, and evoked marvellous feats of most graceful agility on the part of the men. Were it not for the hideous and entirely unnecessary cruelty to the horses of the picadores, placed to await the first attack of each bull, and against which the first rush is invariably made, tossing them high into the air, the unhappy riders barely, and not always, escaping the horns, horses and men rolling over in one indistinguishable heap on the sand ; and were the bulls always finally spared, instead of only occasionally, the exhibition might be an interesting one, of immense skill, courage, and graceful agility on the part of the men, and of wild ferocity and brute strength on that of the bulls.

But, unfortunately, the populace is content with nothing less than the slaughter of the greater part of the bulls, which it demands with fury, as well as the wanton and entirely superfluous sacrifice of the horses ; and only with difficulty is persuaded to spare some particularly grand and “*bravo*” *toro*, to “fight another day.”

On this occasion, of the six bulls, three magnificent and tremendously-ferocious ones were let off with life, after having done tremendous execution. The sun had set before all was over, and, in the gloaming, a playful young bull with “tipped” horns was let into the arena for the amusement of the *gamins* of the assemblage, who all jumped into the arena and played at bull-fighting for half an hour, many of them being rolled over and tossed, and, I should think, uncomfortably bruised, amid the deafening plaudits of the grown-up audience, which, how-

ever, at one moment, nearly took to flight in a panic, the lively young bull, in one bound, having nearly cleared the palisade, just dragged back in time by a lasso.

By a brilliant moonlight, glittering on the many fountains in the park and streets, we walked back to the Casa, passing the monument raised to the memory of Hidalgo, the "patriot-priest" and "Father of Mexican Independence," and his colleague, Allende, who were, together, shot on this spot in 1811, after fighting one year, with varying success, against Spanish rule.

The next morning, at 7.30, we rejoined the Mexican Central, and passing the fine mountain, El Coronel, across several charming valleys well watered by fine rivers, one or two of which we crossed, past the famous hot-springs of Santa Rosalia, to Yimenez about midday, where a really excellent dinner was provided, and quite half an hour to eat it in, delicious fruits included.

On we go, through cotton lands so rich and fertile that the plants only have to be renewed every four years, the bordering hills full of inexhaustible silver mines; towards sunset stopping at Torreon for an appetizing supper; on, through the night, rising up a mountainous track, till, at nine next morning, we stop at an altitude of 8,000 feet, at the curious and picturesque city of Zacatécas—seated on the hills, surrounded by still higher hills—a vast array of flat-roofed, eastern-looking houses and domed buildings, situation and aspect of the city being thought to strongly resemble that of Jerusalem.

This is the great silver-mining centre, and contains a large and prosperous mining population; also many fine public buildings, a domed cathedral built in 1612, with a rich façade, and a charming "alameda" (promenade) with fountains and flowers, and lovely foliaged plants.

After looking at these things, including a curious and picturesque market-place full of gorgeous fruit, we walked up a steep, rocky path, a good climb, up to the Bufo, a huge rocky mass of porphyry, overhanging the city, on nearly the top of which is perched, at a height of 800 feet above the town, a pretty little chapel, "Los Remedios," much frequented by pilgrims.

The view from the patio of this chapel is magnificent—grand, but bare, silver mountains, and far-distant stretches of fertile plains, in which seven great cities may be distinctly seen. All the water for Zacatécas is carried to the houses by water-carriers, most picturesque figures, with their huge water-jars slung to their backs, and each driving before him his burro (donkey) similarly laden.

We descended by another side, a much easier way, a broad road, by which we soon arrived at our hotel, the "Zacatécano," of very grand and imposing appearance, once a monastery, with wide, high flights of stone staircases, and grand arched cloisters above, surrounding the four sides of a beautiful patio, into which open large, and airy, and very clean bedrooms.

We had a hurried luncheon in the ancient monks' refectory, a huge and very handsome apartment, opening, with fine open-air arches, into the cloister, itself open to the air.

Immediately after, we proceeded in cars propelled down-hill by their own momentum, six miles to the little town of Guadalupe, a team of six stout mules quietly trotting along the road beside us by themselves; when they reach Guadalupe, their harness, which had been conveyed in the car, is placed upon them. They are fastened to the cars, and draw them back up the steep hill to Zacatécas, and so on, backwards and forwards, the whole livelong day,

till after dark, with never a moment's rest. How they manage to keep so fat and well one can't think! but they seemed in the best of condition, and I may here remark that the Mexicans appear to take great care of their beasts, feed them well, and hardly ever seem to beat or ill-treat them. They scold them, and call them "names" in a threatening voice to any extent, but happily words break no bones!

The church of the Guadalupe, an imposing structure, with a high dome covered with brilliant yellow tiles, stands charmingly in a lovely garden, one mass of roses, and bordered with orange trees and high poplars and eucalyptus. The interior is much decorated, and seems to be always crowded with pilgrims. Attached to this fine old church, dating back to the Conquest, is a smaller "capilla" (chapel), erected a few years ago at an immense cost by a lady of the neighbourhood. The altar is one mass of solid silver, with gold decorations, the altar-steps and walls decorated with the beautiful Mexican onyx; the altar-rails of solid silver, lighted by the stained-glass windows of a high dome richly adorned in mosaic and paintings; the floor of the most costly Mexican woods, inlaid and highly polished.

Near the church is a gallery of art, interesting as representing Mexican personages and saints by native artists, but of little value as works of art.

Everything in a state of the most absolute cleanliness and order.

We returned in the car, this time drawn merrily up the steep incline by the six sturdy mules, gay with embroidered trappings, and jangling innumerable bells, which served to drown the anathemas with which the driver egged them on, back to Zacatécas, where, after sunset, we returned to

our fortress-like monastic "Fonda," where the supper was more abundant than nice.

The moonlight was lovely in the cloisters and patio, but the air seemed redolent of ghostly monks and the oppression of a kind of churchyard, despite the plentiful circulation of cold night air, through the large unglazed windows and arches.

And I was not sorry to leave it next morning, and to walk, in the bright sunshine, to the estacion, whence the 9 a.m. train carried us—grand views of the picturesque city and fine panorama of mountains, as we passed over the great silver-mines—into a series of the most exquisitely fertile and admirably-cultivated, well-watered valleys, ever bordered towards the far horizon, on each side, by the beautiful, parallel blue ranges of ramifications of the great Sierra Madre.

We were told that several Englishmen had bought and cultivated extensive tracts of this rich and beautiful valley—with in the tropic of Cancer, but on so high a level—everywhere from 5,000 to 8,000 feet above sea, that the heat is never extreme, sunstrokes are absolutely unknown, and the delicious and exhilarating climate reminds one, in the loveliness of its brilliant cloud-land and delicate blue skies, of the more perfect of our summer days in England.

The train stops for dinner (a very good one) at Aguas Calientes, which, as its name implies, contains innumerable hot springs, of the most curative description. The hot mineral water bubbles up in every direction, and flows, in steaming streams, along the sides of the streets, forming here and there into pools, where the graceful Mexican women and children may be seen washing their clothes.

A very fine bathing establishment, thickly embowered

in fragrant orange groves, where hot mineral springs flow in and out of marble baths and reservoirs, forming large pools in the great marble patio, where, shadowed by lovely trees up which creep masses of sweet roses and jasmine, you may bathe in the open air all the year round; presenting irresistible temptation to the dusty wayfarer.

Bright and flowery gardens, teeming with birds, of song as sweet as their plumage is bright, abound on all sides, the pretty little church almost hidden by giant palms and bananas. We were told that there were here at least three very good hotels, much frequented by the fashionable señoritas of Mexico city, who find the hot springs very beautifying to the complexion.

Here the country is all one admirably cultivated plain of extraordinary fertility, irrigated by means of aqueducts; with, in the distance, only one set of hills, fantastically shaped, visible.

Far away, across these green sunny plains, frequently appears the mirage of a sunny lake; but, as fresh water abounds, it is not here the cruelly-deluding vision that mocks the thirsty traveller in the desert.

There are no deserts in Mexico, everywhere fertility and cultivation; even in the more arid soil high up in plateaux among the mountains, endless rows of the many varieties of the great national, indigenous, aloe-like plant, the agave, are cultivated, furnishing bread, fruit, drink, clothing, cordage, writing-material, and many other necessaries and luxuries, to the inhabitants, now, as when Cortés led into this wonderful land his little band of adventurers.

About an hour after leaving Aguas Calientes we went across one of those terrific high trestle-bridges, just the mere unprotected track, with no attempt whatever at balustrade, of great length and extreme height, over



RIO ENCARNACION—MEXICO. P. 123.

rivers or ravines, which so frequently furnish you with a *mauvais quart-d'heure* in Mexico, and, indeed, all over the American continent.

The train is compelled, by law, as well as necessity, to creep so slowly over them that you have full time and opportunity for realizing the fearful height at which you are, all unprotected, winding, or passing, as it were, through the air ! You feel like Blondin on his aerial rope, minus his *sang-froid* ; and the relief with which you once more find yourself on *terra firma* !

This particular specimen of the terrible trestle-bridges crosses the Rio Encarnacion, with its reservoir, at the dizzy height of 150 feet, from which you scarcely dare to look down into the watery depths below ! It is, besides, of great length—a magnificent engineering triumph and splendid feather in the cap of the English engineer who made it, but not good for nerves !

On we go, this formidable obstacle passed, through Lagos, a prosperous manufacturing town of 40,000 inhabitants, into a valley famous, even in Mexico, for its marvellous fertility, to Leon, which boasts 100,000 dwellers, all devoted to the manufacture of the lovely, soft Mexican leather, in which men and horses and all are clothed, with exquisite embroideries of gold and silver.

At the station lovely specimens are held up by picturesquely-attired men and women ; and huge sombreros are offered for sale—some for a dollar, some for twenty or thirty dollars. They try to persuade you to buy with the most insinuating smiles, but are much too polite to press you if they see that you are disinclined. Their soft voices and courteous manners are so charming that it would be too unkind to refuse, and one always ends by buying some little trifle.

Then on, through this wonderful valley of sugar-canæs and other tropical productions, to Silao, at about sunset, where is an excellent railway restaurant and a charming little hotel close by, embowered in lovely trees and flowering creepers, with delightful rooms on the ground floor, furnished with large windows from ceiling to floor, opening into the flowery veranda, where we stayed the night, so as to see the remainder of the enchanting country between this and Mexico city by daylight.

Next morning (November 15th), after fortifying ourselves with a good breakfast at the excellent restaurant (for the hotel is only for lodging), we started at 8 a.m. and sped through glorious valleys encompassed by grandly-formed hills; passing, amongst others, the famous Strawberry Station, Irapuato, where ripe fresh strawberries are to be had the whole year round.

Directly the train stops the usual picturesque Mexican venders appear, their arms full of large baskets brimming over with delicious and very large strawberries, which you buy for twenty-five cents, and regale yourself joyfully with as on you go through a paradise of a valley, occasionally passing some magnificent castellated hacienda, the country habitation of some great proprietor, stopping at Salamanca, where the natives again appear, this time specially laden with great picturesque jars full of "pulqué," which they offer with persuasive smiles to the *viajero* in small, very clean, shining glasses. Woe to you if, unable to resist, you accept a dose of this sweet and sickening liquor! It is the national drink, distilled from the leaves of the useful agave, and is, I believe, quite wholesome, but certainly an "acquired" taste, if ever, for strangers! It looks like milk, and has a most disagreeable sickly taste, but the natives delight in it, and make, from the same source, the

agave, that variety of it called "maguey," a spirituous liquor called "Méscal," made from its roots, which is not at all bad, and very reviving after fatigue.

Still on we go, rising through lovely cultivation, past Querétaro, where the natives present you with countless opals to buy for a mere song, the neighbouring mines simply teeming with them; but the prejudice against them for their proverbial ill-luck prevents many from succumbing. We bought none, although offered almost a handful for a dollar.

Then past a glorious grove of palms, bananas, and mangoes, the air redolent of the scent of orange and lemon blossom, to the magnificent aqueduct supported by superb stone piers 90 feet high, under which the train passes,—the biggest cotton mills in America seen in the plain—on to San Juan del Rio, at an elevation of nearly 7,000 feet, grand mountains, their sides cultivated to a great height, delicious valleys nestling between, and little villages dominated by fine haciendas. Still rising, higher and higher, with lovely vales below, till the highest point, 8,133 feet, is reached at Marquéz, through rows and masses of agaves and yuccas and cacti, then descending a thousand feet or so to Tula, the ancient capital of the wonderful Toltec civilization, situated in the loveliest valley imaginable, gorgeous with flowers and exquisite foliated trees glistening in the golden sunshine; through which we speed, coming into sight of the "Tajo de Nocis tongo," a huge canal begun by the Spaniards in 1607, from 200 to 600 feet wide, and nearly 200 feet deep, for the purpose of draining the great lakes in the valley of Mexico. It was never finished, but there seems now some prospect of its continuation, at a proposed cost of eight million dollars.

A little further on we see one of the most interesting sights in the world, the high-placed Valley of Mexico, with its distant ranges of hills and its two gigantic sentinels, rose-red in the last rays of the setting sun—the steep, pyramid-like Popocatepetl (“Hill that smokes”) rearing its sharp cone of snow, 17,780 feet into the blue, rose-flaked sky; and Ixtaccihuatl (“the white woman”) about 16,000 feet in height, but broader in shape, crested, as it were, with a snow-white woman’s form resting on its for ever cloud-wreathed summit.

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CHAPTER XIII.

Mexico City—Chinampas—Museo Nacional—San Carlos—Chapoltepec—“Arbol de la Noche triste”—Guadalupe-Hidalgo.

IN Mexico city! The sun had set and the rapid twilight almost given place to the shades of night as we entered where once had stood Tenochtitlan!

In the semi-darkness, what visions arose of lake-encompassed city and palaces, hanging gardens and teocallis and pomp of Moctezuma, dim patriotic shades of the great Cuitlahuac and no less heroic CuahTEMOC; Cortés, the glories of his triumphant entry, and the horrors of his “Noche triste!” All these chequered things that the “Cactus growing out of the rock” had seen, and of which we should see the site to-morrow.

Meantime, we see the towers of the great cathedral proudly rising towards the stars on the very site of the mighty Aztec temple—concealing beneath its huge foundations what unknown buried treasures!

Lovely groves of palm and orange trees, and solemn cypress shade its massive walls, as they stretch across one whole side of the Plaza Mayor. It was closed for the night, but soon the electric lights by which the city is well lighted brought into commanding prominence its grand and imposing mass, whilst we wandered round admiring.

Then to our hotel, not far, the “Jardin,” large and admirably clean, surrounding, on three sides; with wide

verandas on each floor, the loveliest patio, full of giant palms and bananas, orange trees, golden with fruit and fragrant with flowers, and tall poinsettia trees, dazzling in their masses of scarlet leaves.

The rooms on the first floor where we had chosen ours were very large and airy, and each opened through its own ante-chamber, on to the wide veranda overlooking the sweet-scented garden.

There was no super-abundance, but sufficiency of furniture, spotlessly-clean wooden floors; and, if you pleased, you could receive your friends in your ante-room, if you preferred it to the public "parlour," round the corner of the veranda, furnished with gilt mirrors and velvet-covered sofas and chairs and a grand piano—the whole as often as not kept locked, but opened at the request of any "guest." Excellent baths are on the ground floor.

All meals are taken at the restaurant attached to one side of the garden, open the whole day, from 5.30 a.m. to about 11 p.m., and entirely separate from the hotel—a great convenience, as meals can be had at any hour, or elsewhere if preferred.

This convenience was its only redeeming quality, for the food was below par and the general service left much to be desired; but there was a delightful old French waiter who took the most kindly interest in us, and did his "possible" to provide us with everything of the best, such as the "best" was.

After supper the moon had risen and was shining exquisitely into our patio, already illumined by the electric light.

Next morning (November 16th) we breakfasted at 6.30 and walked immediately afterwards to the Plaza Mayor, which we had dimly seen the previous evening. It is a very

fine square, of great size, the centre of all the principal “callés” (streets), with a charming garden, the Zocola, well laid out with walks and ornamental trees and excellent turf, and flower-beds and seats in the centre; one side of the square entirely occupied by lovely groves, from which rises the grand imposing mass of the huge fortress-like cathedral, with a façade of 425 feet, a height of 180, and a length of 200 feet, consecrated in 1573. Two massive towers, 218 feet high, were added at the west end later, and were not completed till 1731. Several lesser tower-like projections, and two grand domes rising above capillas: the roof itself rising here and there into irregular, dome-like projections, with the vastly solid and picturesque effect that is seen in all the great cathedrals of Mexico, and so many of those of Spain.

The massive walls are much sculptured, in the elaborately florid style of the later and inferior Spanish renaissance; but the general effect of the whole gigantic pile is exceedingly fine and imposing, towering high above all the surrounding buildings, and forming a magnificent centre to the city: the beautiful trees and gardens that surround it adding immense charm to its general appearance. At the east end the cathedral is joined by the Sagrario, in which marriages and baptisms take place. It adds largely to the great mass of building, but its walls are decorated in the most debased “churriguresque” style.

Another entire side of the plaza is occupied by the immense Palacio Nacional, 675 feet long, the city residence of the President of the Republic, which also includes most of the government offices. The whole of the side opposite to it is taken up by shops of various kinds, especially booksellers’, interrupted by openings for two or three callés, and the City Hall.

Opposite the cathedral the principal street, Callé de San Francisco, leads to the Alameda, a beech-shaded promenade with pretty gardens, in close proximity to the magnificent Paseo de la Reforma, where the beauty and fashion of the city disports itself on horseback and in carriages (unfortunately almost invariably closed) every afternoon from 4 till sunset, with the addition, on Sundays, of a "church parade," from noon till 1 p.m.

We wandered about, viewing the exterior of the cathedral from various points of view, till 10 o'clock, at which hour the Museo Nacional is to be seen till twelve.

It is situated at the back of the Palacio Nacional, and is a large handsome building into which you enter through a great archway and hall, leading into an exquisite patio beautifully laid out with geometrically-shaped flower beds full of the loveliest and most brilliant flowers, and masses of rose trees and dwarf mandarins, all one sheet of bloom; the air filled with their delicious fragrance and the murmur of fountains of the clearest and most sparkling water, the hot sunshine tempered by giant palms, and two still more gigantic Poinsettia trees, dazzlingly resplendent in their superb scarlet foliage. You walk across the lovely garden, and enter through a wide archway into the huge oblong hall in which stand the wondrous monuments of Aztec civilization, and also those of its unparalleled brutality.

As this was only the first of many visits we made to this wonderful museo, I reserve to a later period the description of these stone records of the Aztec race, which for only three centuries occupied the Mexican plateau and the neighbouring provinces of the land of Anahuac, following, at an interval of a century, in the track of an infinitely more civilized predecessor, that mysterious Toltec ("Builder")

race, whose origin, and subsequent migrations, are lost in dim obscurity, whose works are seen in the gigantic ruins of Tula, Palemke, Mitla, and other half-buried cities; and whose worship of the "Unknown God" on grand pyramids crowned with soaring Teocallis—the stately lines of which the Aztecs initiated—was celebrated with sacrifices of only incense, fruits and flowers.

The Museo closed at 12, and we returned to our hotel-restaurant for a hurried luncheon, after which we proceeded by electric car to the Viga canal, and at Embarcadero, in a distant suburb, we embarked on a broad canoe, its seats shaded by canvas awning, propelled in gondola fashion, by a picturesque native, who enlivened us with very good and most sentimental singing of Spanish ballads, interrupting himself to point out the various points of view, most amiably.

I may here remark that neither here, nor anywhere in all our travels through Mexico, did we ever encounter the evil odours that in so many of the most interesting countries of the Old World quite mar one's enjoyment. All Mexican cities, towns, churches, public buildings, and houses generally, are extraordinarily remarkable for cleanliness, order, and airiness.

The day was warm and deliciously sunshiny, and it was pleasant gliding gently up the canal, between thick rows of fine poplars and other deciduous trees, not in the least tropical, but such as you might see in England. Indeed, all over the immediate neighbourhood of the city of Mexico, the vegetation gives no hint whatever of its situation within the Tropics. Its cultivated and sheltered gardens are adorned with fine palms, bananas, bamboos, and other products of warm latitudes, but the altitude (7,400 feet) is too great for the spontaneous and natural

growth of the plants of even the second division of Mexican climate—the “tierra templada” (temperate land). This highly-placed valley forms part of the “tierra fria” (cold land)—“cold,” however, only comparatively speaking.

The sun is hot, and for ever shining in the loveliest of tender blue skies. The so-called “winter climate,” beginning with November and continuing till June, is absolutely perfect. You revel in delicious, hot, but not too hot, sunshine; occasional lovely, fleecy cloudlets float in the transparent blue; and you breathe an air divinely soothing, yet exhilarating.

As we glided along between sun-chequered foliage, we descried blue distant mountains, and the two superb snow-crowned volcanoes, Popocatepetl and Ixtaccihuault, rising from one of the ramifications of the Sierra Madre, itself a continuation of the mighty range of the great Cordilleras, which, rising in Patagonia, form, under the names of Andes, Sierra Madre, and Rocky Mountains, the one continuous western backbone of South and North America.

Ixtaccihuault is now thought to be extinct; but Popocatepetl, and the much grander Pico de Orizaba (not visible here) evince constant signs of fiery life in ever-fresh deposits of sulphur crystals on the inner sides of their snow-clad craters.

The two first (known) ascents of Popocatepetl were made by adventurous cavaliers of the army of Cortés, to the astonished admiration of his Tlascalan allies, who declared that none could ascend the great Volcan and live. At the time of the first ascent, continuous fire and smoke from the crater made it impossible to reach the upper edge; but two years later Montaño and four comrades successfully reached the very edge—the fire

being temporarily at rest—and looked down an abyss of over 1,000 feet, in the fiery depths of which they saw lambent flames and ascending clouds of vapourous sulphur. Nevertheless, Montaño had himself lowered several times in a basket into this fearful pit to a depth of 400 feet, till he had gathered enough crystallized sulphur for the manufacture of the amount of gunpowder required by Cortés.

No wonder that the “Conquistador,” in his letter describing the adventure to the Emperor Charles V., laconically remarks that “it might be more convenient, and on the whole cheaper, to have his gunpowder sent to him ready-made from Spain.”

From that time no ascent was made of the “Hill-that-smokes” till the present century, when it was twice ascended; and from the topmost peak no crater of any kind could be discerned on the neighbouring and less elevated Ixtaccihuatl, contrary to tradition, which had always described the “White Woman” as a volcano.

To return to our Viga canal. For two miles we floated on till we reached the “Chinampas” of Santa Anita, or “floating gardens,” which, in Aztec days, they undoubtedly were. To-day they merely float on swampy ground, divided by little canals, into gardens covered with roses and other gay flowers and vegetables.

We were taken all over these little gardens by a fine-looking “mestizo” with a guitar, who afterwards accompanied us in our canoe, and sang with a beautiful tenor voice and intense sentiment, many charming Spanish and Mexican songs, to its accompaniment.

He also showed us the picturesque “hacienda”—which all strangers are taken to see—of Don Juan de Corona, a famous defunct Toreador, who was as noted for his great

charity as for his unrivalled skill in the "Funciones," and established and endowed an excellent school for orphans, which still remains as he left it. The hacienda is full of trophies of Don Juan, and relics of the War of Independence.

When we returned to the canal we found our canoe surrounded by a number of others, which had arrived meantime, full of vegetables and fruits of glowing colour, paddled by pretty Mexican women in their graceful light blue draperies, and men in white cotton and great sombreros. The reflection of all this gay scene and colour in the blue sunlit water was quite charming.

The canal continues for 5 miles to the Lake Kochimitlicho.

After our return to the "Embarcadéro," we started by tram to Guadalupe-Hidalgo, about two miles north of the city, with lovely views all the way of the great volcanoes, now rosy in the setting sunrays.

At the foot of beautiful hills stands the domed and many-towered imposing church of Guadalupe, in commemoration of which so many Guadalupe churches and chapels are to be seen all over Mexico.

The legend tells that, in the year 1531, a poor Mexican slave, Juan Diego by name, whilst tending his goats on the mountain beneath which stands the present church, was one day surprised by the sudden vision of a beautiful lady clad in raiment white as snow, who bade him climb to the high rocks above, and gather for her the lovely flowers he would find growing there. Although he knew that no flowers could bloom on so stony a spot, he obeyed, and to his glad surprise found great masses of the sweetest and loveliest roses and lilies; he joyfully gathered as many as his tilma could hold, and quickly returned to where the

shining vision awaited him. She took the flowers, and sweetly smiling upon him, vanished from sight; and what was the poor man's joy to see imprinted on the poor and coarse texture of his tilma (mantle) a perfect image of the heavenly countenance of the white-robed vanished vision!

He flew with his tilma and his wonderful story to the bishop, who refused to believe till he had himself climbed to the rocky waste and seen the flowers of paradise blooming. Then he caused the present church to be built, and a golden shrine enriched with gems for the poor slave's tilma, with its indelible print of the heavenly vision, where it has been ever since the object of countless pilgrimages from all parts of Mexico, in memory of the event by which such celestial favour was shown to the poor, oppressed, down-trodden Mexican nation.

I think most will agree of this graceful legend, that "*se non è vero, è ben trovato!*"

The view from the higher hill, where a small capilla was built to commemorate the rocky ground blooming with flowers, is magnificent, especially at this hour of sunset.

The great church was closed for repairs, only the chapel, in which is enshrined the tilma, open; but daylight was passing, and the lamps too dim to see it distinctly.

We returned to the city in the gloaming; the high white cone of Popocatepetl still shining in the last red rays, and spent an hour wandering among the bookshops, seeking in vain to find, in Spanish or any other language, books descriptive of Mexican antiquities.

At last, in a small curiosity shop, I found an instructive little book on the subject by an eminent Mexican antiquarian. The shop also contained charming specimens of Mexican feather and picture work, most delicate and lovely, for which, alas, must have been slaughtered in-

numerable numbers of those exquisite and divine little birds of the "humming" tribe, whose delicate and dainty loveliness no words can describe. Tiny feathered embodiments of fire and sunshine, they seem too spiritualized for this work-a-day world, and only fit for Paradise or Fairyland.

The Atzec dream of highest bliss hereafter was to be turned into a bird of this, or the exquisite "Quetzal" kind, and to flit for ever in cloudless sunshine from fragrant flower to flower.

Next morning we had intended going again to the Museo, but finding it closed on Saturdays, went on to the San Carlos Museum of Fine Arts.

Here there is a fine collection of Flemish and Spanish paintings, but we were, naturally, more interested in seeing the native art, so devoted our time to the numerous excellent Mexican painters, old and modern. Amongst these we saw many admirable works—a perfectly lovely Santa Cecilia, Santa Anna and others, by Balthazar de Echave, one of their earliest and finest painters; several sacred subjects, admirably treated by Juarez (called the Raffaelle of Mexico) except that his draperies are sometimes a little wooden; also successful in the same *genre*, Miguel Cabrera, S. Pirra, Bibiesca, Sagrado, and others.

Fine historical paintings, on a large scale, by Ramirez, a modern painter, specially his "Youth of Isabella Catolicia," "Visit of Cortés to Moctezuma," "Torture of Cuahtemoc," a striking picture, in which the heroic and last Emperor of the Aztecs is represented seated in presence of Cortés, with his feet bound over a brazier of burning coals, in the act of sternly saying to the King of Tacuba, his kinsman, similarly bound, who, tortured beyond endurance, looks imploringly at him as if to beg for leave

to put an end to the torture by revealing the secret of the hidden treasure :

“ And am I, perchance, on a bed of roses ? ”

This indomitable fortitude had, at least, the effect of shaming the conqueror into ordering his release, and that of his kinsman, from the horrors of the torturing burning coals, which had already nearly destroyed their feet; and, for a time, the noble Cuahtemoc was treated by Cortés with kindness and magnanimity.

To return, however, to “ San Carlos.” We next admired two grand paintings by F. Parra, of “ Las Casas protecting the Indians,” and “ Galileo ; ” S. Pirra’s “ Othello smothering Desdemona,” and “ Hagar and Ishmael ; ” Juan Cordero’s “ Columbus before Ferdinand and Isabella ; ” several very fine paintings by José Obregon, especially his beautiful “ Christopher Columbus,” “ Episodio de la Conquista,” and many others.

Landscape is less affected by Mexican painters, but we saw a few fine mountain and lake views of the neighbourhood of Puebla and other places.

The wide and lofty galleries in which these pictures are hung are extremely well-lighted and handsomely decorated.

They close at noon, so we proposed returning another day, and proceeded to an excellent restaurant, “ La Concordia,” in the Callé San Francisco close by, to which we had been directed by a friend, for luncheon; after which, by tram, to the beautiful and famous Chapoltepec, anciently the favourite residence of Moctezuma II.

The tram goes through shady avenues in the midst of lovely green meadows for about two miles, till the beautiful park of Chapoltepec (“ hill of the grasshopper ”) is reached, full of magnificent cypresses, said to be from

four to five thousand years old, and other grand trees, surrounding, and rising to the summit of the high, rocky eminence on which is situated the castle of Chapoltepec, built by the early Spanish viceroys on the site of the palace of Moctezuma.

The public garden at the foot of the hill is charmingly laid out with fountains and flower-beds, all kept in perfect order, and is shaded by magnificent cedars and cypresses, from every branch of which hang suspended delicate draperies of a soft, silvery-grey moss.

On the right side of the garden stand great monoliths, carved with strange Aztec figures and hieroglyphs, beyond which rises the wide and steep road, guarded by perpendicular rocks on the left and splendid trees on the right, reaching down the steep hillside to the lovely park below.

One giant tree stands majestically out among the rest, halfway up, a venerable cypress, shining as one mass of pendent silver in its hoary robe of gray moss. This is the tree under which Moctezuma is said to have wept and bewailed the terrible incubus of white strangers he was powerless to eject.

The road rises steeper and steeper as it winds up the great island-like hill, till it reaches the fortified terraces on the summit of the commanding height, in front of the wide buildings which comprise the castellated palace and military college. From the lower garden, to the left, rises a short pathway up steep stone staircases, straight to the grand, terraced front of the castle, up which I went (this way being much shorter and very picturesque, reserving the long winding road for my return), and soon found myself under the great fortified wall of the terrace, to the top of which I ascended by a flight of stone steps.

On reaching the terrace I saw several carriages waiting,



CYPRESSES—CHAPOLTEPEC. P. 139.

and a number of soldiers, fine-looking men in smart uniforms standing about, outside the great iron gates leading into the inner terrace, and lovely fountained court of orange trees immediately overlooked by the castle. I asked the sentinel at the gate whether I might enter this inner court to make a sketch? He answered, most politely, that the public were not admitted, but that as I was "estranjéra" (foreigner) he would go and ask the officer on duty.

A minute or two later two or three much-decorated officers made their appearance in exceedingly smart uniforms, and with a series of the most polite bows and smiles said that "la señora was most welcome to enter into the court and see all over it, and make sketches until sunset, when the gates had to be closed."

So, with many thanks, I walked in, and oh! the view from the terraced and fountained garden! No words can describe its marvels of beauty! You look from the height on to loveliest masses of exquisite foliage, shelving down to the glorious valley beneath, richly fertile, dotted with small expanses of blue mirror-like water fringed with delicate golden poplars, stretching, on all sides, far away into the shadowy blue distance of a superb amphitheatre of mountains, the sharp white cone of Popocatepetl rising straight into the azure sky, whilst, to his left, reposing as ever under shining wreaths of misty clouds, towers the silvery mass of the white Ixtaccihuatl. In front of these a chain of gracefully-shaped little foot-hills of an exquisite melting turquoise-blue, and, to left and right, wild spurs of the serrated Sierra, a dream divine of glory and poetic peace and beauty!

What must be the inspiring effect upon those who dwell on these heights, and see ever before them these

silvery eternal hills, everlastingly still, yet changing with every lovely shadow, guarding the reposeful valley beneath!

It is a scene to dwell in one's dreams, an impossible one to give any true idea of on paper, yet I ventured to try.

It was sad to be every now and then interrupted by the courtesy of the amiable officers, wishing to know if I required anything, and asking to be allowed to see the progress of my sketch.

At sunset—oh its unspeakable glory! I came away, down by the long, slowly-winding carriage road, lingering to take in the view opposite to the one above, and every gorgeous tree, towering among them Moctezuma's tree; how ghostly it looked in its hoary mantle of silvery moss, as the shades of evening gathered over it! Down to the lower garden, and into the unpoetical tram, and so back to the Plaza Mayor, where electric lights and rising moon lighted the huge cathedral pile, into some shops, and home to the Jardin.

Next morning (Sunday, November 18th) we breakfasted before seven, and then by tram to the cemetery of San Fernando, surrounded by high stone walls, to which are attached wide stone cloisters, and a handsome gateway.

The cemetery is admirably well kept, and is adorned with beautiful orange-trees and high palms, and lovely flowering creepers festooned over most of the tombs. Many of the monuments are very fine, especially that of the patriot chief Guerrera, taken prisoner and shot during the war of Independence; but the central and most beautiful point of interest is the magnificent mausoleum erected to the memory of Juarez, of Indio-Mexican parentage, the restorer of the Republic after the French invasion and the short and calamitous reign of the Emperor Maximilian.

The marble sarcophagus, in which repose his remains, is artistically and beautifully sculptured; and his recumbent marble effigy, peacefully reclining in the arms of "la Patria"—a female figure of the greatest beauty, in an attitude of still-powerful strength resting in death—is admirably portrayed by a native sculptor, who has executed the whole beautiful white marble group with extreme power combined with the utmost refinement and artistic feeling.

The love with which the Mexicans regard the memory of this artificer of their independence is shown by the innumerable trophies and flags and wreaths of immortelles, and daily fresh flowers, with which the mausoleum and marble spaces round the tomb are covered.

Juarez has been much blamed for the implacability with which he ruthlessly insisted on the execution of the sentence of death, pronounced by council of war, upon his prisoner, the Emperor Maximilian: but it must be remembered that the same rigour had been observed by the enemy in the case of innumerable guerilla-chiefs and leaders of the Republicans, and that he wished to prove to the nations of Europe the determination of Mexico to govern itself, and to resist, to the last extremity, any European attempt to place upon it a yoke or a ruler.

After this we returned to the Plaza, in time for the 9 a.m. high mass at the cathedral. It was the first time we had seen the interior, which is imposing as to size and bulk, 179 feet in height. The roof is supported by ninety quadruple columns, each 35 feet in circumference. The "coro," as in almost all Spanish churches, is placed in the centre, the stalls richly carved and inlaid with beautiful woods; two rows of aisles on each side and a number of chapels, several of which contain paintings by distinguished native

artists; the interior of the great dome, finely decorated and painted, but the altars and general ornamentation are in bad style and very unworthy of the stately edifice.

The congregation, which was large and very picturesque, stood, or knelt, or sat on the ground; and joined fervently rather than melodiously in the chanting, which was accompanied by two of those rather cracked, old-world-sounding organs which, I think, have such a melancholy poetic charm, and with which one is so familiar in Spain.

An eloquent Spanish sermon was preached by a venerable-looking Franciscan, towards the end of which, all at once, through the wide-open doors, came loud sounds of festivity and military bands.

As soon as the service was over I ran out into the Plaza, with the rest of the congregation, to see what it was all about. It was the funniest sight! the arrival in the city, from neighbouring ranchos, of the eight "bravo toros," intended for the "funcion" of the afternoon.

One or two of the less precious of the bulls were allowed to walk; but two or three very magnificent ones, specially chosen from famous haciendas, the owners of which vie with each other as to who shall provide the finest and most ferocious beasts (which they do without payment), were far too highly valued to be brought into the city in any other way than mounted on triumphal cars.

These cars were gaily decorated with the national colours, white and red, and were furnished with poles to which drapery was gracefully attached, garlanded with roses, with an opening in front, through which the head of the bull, profusely wreathed with jasmine and crowned with roses, looked gravely forth, with fiery eyes and threatening horns—the rest of his person hidden in the thick folds of drapery—from his chariot of triumph, upon the vociferating

and cheering mob. Of course he was chained in, but no fastenings could be seen—only the splendid head, with its tremendous horns, and the giant neck with its necklace of flowers.

Several cars conveyed these formidable monsters slowly across the plaza, preceded and followed by military bands, playing gay and spirited marches; all the toreros, with the exception of the great “*Espadas*,” marching behind, the immense crowd shrieking, whistling, applauding, in a delirious phrensy of delight.

The “bravo toros” seemed thoroughly to enjoy their triumphal progress, and little guessed it led to extinction; for few of them ever return.

The whole city seemed to have turned out, and endless crowds crossed the plaza.

After this quaint and funny sight, with, however, its element of danger, we went to the Museo Nacional, which opens on Sundays, as on other days, at 10; and at 12, when it closed, returned to the Plaza to visit the Palacio Nacional, the whole of which we were able to see, the President being in residence at Chapoltepec.

This huge quadrilateral building encloses the usual fine patio, of great extent. The Hall of Ambassadors is a long and very fine gallery, containing a number of most interesting portraits; Columbus, Cortés, Alvarado, Juarez, Morelos, Guerrero, Hidalgo; the emperors Iturbide and Maximilian; the more important of the Spanish Viceroys (sixty-two of whom flourished within the 300 years of the Spanish domination), and many other celebrities, including several of the kings of Spain, and the present successful and admirable president, Porfirio-Diaz. The government offices and reception rooms are also fine and handsomely decorated.

Next we visited the Horticultural Garden, inclosed within the precincts, full of rare and most interesting flowers and plants and trees, some unique, and many of them of great medicinal and other value; among the most curious of which, a high, bushy tree, excessively rare, and to be found nowhere in the world but Mexico, covered with flowers exactly resembling a miniature human hand—a number of these strange blooms the amiable official in charge kindly gave me, with a lovely bouquet of flowers and sprigs of the rarer trees.

After again hurriedly enjoying the excellent Mexican *cuisine* of the “Concordia” close by, we started from the Plaza by electric car, to Popotla, some little distance outside the city, to see the “arbol de la noche triste,” a famous old cypress tree, under which Cortés is said to have rested and wept, after his disastrous retreat from the then island-city of Tenochtitlan (the ancient name of the city of Mexico) on the terrible night remembered ever after as the “noche triste” (sorrowful night), after many days’ fighting and prodigies of valour on the part of the Spaniards and their allies the Tlascalans, as well as on that of the justly-enraged Mexicans, who had risen to avenge the treacherous and atrocious massacre of their principal nobles, at a feast, by Pedro de Alvarado during a temporary absence of the general at the coast, and who returned, a few days after, to find the city which he had left peaceful and quiet, in a state of violent commotion and war. Cortés had at last found it necessary to endeavour to evacuate the city, during the night of July 1st, 1520, hoping that, according to their custom, the Aztecs would wait for daylight before resuming hostilities.

In this expectation he found himself, however, mistaken; for his stealthy advance, under cover of darkness, did not

escape the vigilance of the priests watching from the summit of the great Teocalli; and soon the dismal and far-reaching sound of the great war-drum, hung up on high to be sounded by them only on occasions of fateful import, roused the Aztec warriors from their short repose.

Under the determined and valiant lead of their new and heroic emperor, Cuitlahuac—who, a few days before, had been elected to the throne of his pusillanimous brother, Moctezuma, wounded to death by his own people during his efforts at mediation, on the high turret of the palace—the Indians rushed to the attack, fighting like tigers, and disputing every inch of the narrow two miles of broken-up causeway, which, with two other dykes formed the only exits from the city across the shallow lake Texcoco, by which at that period it was entirely surrounded.

In these fatal gaps in the causeway—whence the draw-bridges had been removed by order of Cuitlahuac, and for which Lopez, the chief Spanish shipwright had, in the haste of departure, only provided one portable bridge, which it was found impossible to move from the first gap—the whole of the artillery and baggage, and immense masses of gold, treasure, and ammunition and horses and men found a yawning grave, from which many ill-fated Spaniards were rescued by the Indians, in their swarming canoes, only to be reserved for the more terrible fate of propitiatory sacrifice to their god of war, Huitzilopochtli.

Still is shown, now dry land, the spot called Salto de Alvarado, where that warrior—to whose treacherous cruelty all this disastrous fighting was owing—in desperation planting his lance on the seething mass of dead bodies and treasure and struggling men beneath, leapt across the fearful chasm from the causeway to the land beyond; a superhuman leap, which even in that fearful moment

forced the admiration of his foes, exclaiming to each other, “This is truly the Tonatiuh—the child of the Sun!” a name which had been given to him by them in admiration for his golden-haired beauty and charming manners and smiling countenance, which formed the outer mask of a heart capable of the most atrocious and rapacious cruelty, coupled with extraordinary daring and resourceful courage and enterprise.

With his small force nearly destroyed, the whole of his treasure lost, thousands of his faithful Tlascalan allies slaughtered or drowned, well might Cortés weep! but never for an instant lost heart or courage.

Fortunately for his ultimate success his faithful interpreter, the beautiful Malintzi, after baptism styled Doña Marina, daughter of a Mexican cacique, sold by her cruel stepmother to a Tabascan chief, who presented her, with other slaves, to Cortés, and without whom communication with the Aztecs would have been impossible, for she had quickly learnt to speak Spanish, had been safely brought through the carnage under the care of her faithful Tlascalan guard, and Martin Lopez, the shipwright, who was to construct the brigantines by which the lake could be commanded, was safe, and the more important captains were yet alive.

Through unheard-of perils, and efforts, and adventures, the indomitable energy and perseverance of Cortés, in one short year, carried him triumphantly through every difficulty in Mexico, and from outside it, and on August 13th, 1521, he saw himself in final and triumphant possession of the ruined remains of the famine and pestilence-stricken, once beautiful city of Tenochtitlan.

Well had it been for his fame had he not stained and shadowed it by subsequent cruel and unworthy treatment

of the great and noble Cuahtemoc, who having succeeded to his uncle, the brave Emperor Cuitlahuac—whose heroic reign of only eighty days had been cut short by small-pox, a malady till then unknown in Mexico—had valiantly done all that was possible during the protracted siege to save his nation and beautiful city from the assault of invaders so superior in weapons and engines of war, haughtily rejecting the many overtures for surrender, on honourable terms, made to him by the conqueror, till, in the end, made prisoner in the act of escaping, in a canoe, across the lake, with his principal caciques and his wife, the beautiful Princess Tociuchpo, daughter of Moctezuma II., and taken into the presence of the conqueror, with the noblest and most dignified bearing gave up his sword, saying, “I have done all that I could to defend myself and my people. I am now reduced to these straits. You will deal with me, Malintzin, as you list.” Then pointing to the dagger worn by Cortés, added, “Better despatch me with this and rid me of life at once!” Cortés replied with kindness, expressing admiration for his courage and the splendid defence he had made, assuring him of every consideration and honour due to his rank and bravery: and for a time he was treated with all regard and respect, gaining the affection of his captors by his mild and dignified bearing and the charm of his beauty and fascinating manners, in which he more than equalled Moctezuma, who, during his long sojourn in the Spanish camp, had won, by his affability and generosity, the liking and sympathy of all.

Alas! that the otherwise great “Conquistador” should have later allowed the cupidity of his followers, and their threats and insinuations against himself, to influence him so far as to give up into their cruel hands his noble

captive, to torture till he should reveal the place of concealment of the supposed imperial treasure. And that to this indelible blot on his escutcheon he should have added the yet more heinous stain, during a subsequent disastrous expedition to Honduras, of condemning to the disgraceful death of a felon—on the plea of meditated treachery, of which the evidence was of the flimsiest—the last and noblest of the line of Aztec emperors, whose sad death, hanged to the branch of a ceiba tree, even his own soldiers—as Bernal Diaz, who was present, relates—considered the “unjust and useless sacrifice of the most glorious trophy of his victories.”

The last words of Cuahtemoc to Cortés—“Why do you slay me so unjustly? God will demand it of you!”—enlisted as much sympathy in the eye-witnesses as did those of his friend and kinsman, the king or cacique of Tacuba, who having previously been the sharer of his torture on the brazier of hot coals now was his companion in death, “desiring nothing better than to die with his lord.”

Cuahtemoc, at the time of his death, was aged only twenty-six, and was of so fair a complexion that he might have been taken for a Spaniard. He had some time previously been baptized, in company with his wife and principal caciques, and they were considered, according to Diaz, “for Indians, very good Christians.”

The youthful and lovely Princess Tocinchpo, after the sad and untimely death of her husband, was united in marriage, successively, to no less than four noble Castilian cavaliers, all of whom she survived, and whose descendants, to the present day, count it an honour to claim for ancestress the beautiful and favourite daughter of Moctezuma II. Another noble Spanish family, extinct within this century,



CRATER OF POPOCATEPETL. P. 132.

the Counts de Montezuma, derived descent from the third of Moctezuma's daughters.

It is said that the "Great Captain" suffered much remorse for this unjust execution, which is probably true, for he was—unlike many of his companions and contemporaries—only cruel when he judged that political or other reasons made it requisite, and was not only a poet, but a man of great refinement of character and mind, and of extreme courtesy and charm of manner, and always most feeling and charitable to the poor.

To return to our tree—the "Arbol de la noche triste," under which Cortés wept and rested with the miserable remnant of his brave cavaliers and allies, after the terrible nocturnal retreat—it is a venerable old cypress, now surrounded by an iron railing, to protect it from veneration, as well as from attack. Some years ago it was deliberately set on fire by a patriotic descendant of the Aztecs, to mark his detestation of Spanish memories. Its trunk bears much trace of the flames, but its hoary head is still crowned with verdure.

It is situated a short distance beyond the further end of the still discernible Aztec dyke of Tlacopan, the scene of the terrible struggle of the "Noche triste."

After reposing a few minutes in the warm sunshine, under the scanty shade of the "Arbol," we took the shortest way to the magnificent Paseo de la Reforma, which stretches from the Alameda in one long, broad promenade, bordered by double avenues of superb ceiba, cypress, and pepper trees, two miles, as far as Chapultepec.

At intervals, the promenade widens into grand circles, 400 feet in diameter, called "glorietas," centred by

granite and marble monuments and statues, the finest a huge teocalli-like pile, on the summit of which stands an imposing statue of the great and unfortunate Cuah temoc, in an attitude full of spirit and energy, lance in hand.

The centre of another "glorieta" is adorned by an equestrian statue of Charles IV. of Spain, said to be the hugest in the world. Another of Juarez, and many others.

Handsome stone and marble seats abound, where the passers-by, when tired of promenading under the lovely trees, may sit and watch the picturesque horsemen in their gay and elegant Mexican attire, and their gorgeously-caparisoned horses, and the equipages, mostly closed, in which the fashionable ladies of Mexico, who are said to be remarkable for beauty, parade up and down from 4 or 5 till sunset. The horses are exceedingly handsome, and display their beautiful manes and tails undocked—unlike the hideous and ghastly fashion of London and New York, where most horses have no tail at all left to speak of. They derive descent from the beautiful Andalusian steeds brought over by the conquerors, so many of which are renowned in story, specially the chestnut "Metilla" of Sandoval, almost rivalling in doughty achievements the famous "Babieca" of the Cid.

Till the arrival of Cortés, no horses had ever been seen in Mexico, consequently they greatly contributed to the awe he inspired.

From between the lovely foliage all along this charming Paseo may be seen the great Volcans, looking like giant sentinel-guardians of the vale, themselves guarded by blue shadowy chains of lesser hills.

A friend joined us, and we walked up and down for

some time—a delightful walk—and then back through the gay Alameda and the well-lighted *callés* to the Plaza Mayor, and so home.

Next morning (November 19th) we had intended going by the 6 a.m. train to Jalapa, but just missed it.

CHAPTER XIV.

Puebla de los Angeles—Jalapa—Vera Cruz.

HERE being no other morning train we changed our plans, and after spending the intermediate time visiting again the Museo (an inexhaustible interest) and various other public buildings and churches, took the 4 p.m. train to Puebla de los Angeles, which we reached after a charming journey through lovely country, mountainous but beautifully cultivated; immense tracts of maguey, maïz, cotton, and alfalfa, with its vividly-rich green; and, all the way, exquisite views of the great Volcans, the ancient city of Tlascala in the distance, the capital of the gallant little independent Republic, so famous in the history of the conquest for the determined resistance made by its brave warriors under Xicotencatl to the advance of Cortés from Vera Cruz; afterwards assenting to his proposals for peace and alliance, moved by hereditary rivalry and hatred of the Aztecs, and by their valour and numbers aiding materially in the conquest of Tenochtitlan.

One could fancy what must have been the dazzling effect, in the brilliant sunshine, of these barbaric but gorgeous warriors, clad in chain-armour of gold or silver, covering their inner, padded, cotton-quilted shirt, so excellent for defence, and adopted by the conquerors; their shoulders covered with mantles of exquisite feather-work, their heads

adorned with gorgeous plumes, their faces masked with representations of birds or wild animals; their shining spears and glittering shields, and brandishing staffs shaped like quadruple scythes, with formidable blades of tetzli (obsidian) sharpened to an edge nearly as trenchant as steel.

It was dark when we reached Puebla, the second city in Mexico for size, but the first for beauty, which stands at an elevation of 7,200 feet; and proceeded by electric car through wide streets, well-lighted by electricity, to the hotel "Jardin," situated within five minutes' walk of the principal plaza, in which stand all the chief edifices, including the cathedral.

This hotel, which boasts a small garden with fine palms, we found most comfortable (with the exception of some difficulty as to baths), and much better furnished than the "Jardin" of Mexico city—in fact, quite gorgeously so—with an excellent restaurant attached, good cuisine, and everything as clean and neat as possible; the manager a Frenchman.

After a very good supper, we walked, by brilliant moonlight helped by electric light, to the lovely plaza, in which an excellent military band plays every evening for two hours.

It was enchanting! The whole centre occupied by a beautifully laid-out garden, balmy with the fragrance of orange and lemon trees; grand palms and bananas, and bamboos waving in the soft breeze, brilliant flower-beds surrounding numerous fountains, clear as crystal, playing into marble basins filled with gold fish and lovely blooming aquatic plants; the beautiful and infinitely picturesque tiled domes of the great cathedral shining above the rich foliage.

The whole city seemed assembled; *señoras* of Spanish descent, gracefully draped in their white, or black, lace mantillas, escorted by attendant cavaliers in gay Mexican attire—many of them wrapped in scarlet *sarapés* (toga-like cloaks) promenading, or sitting on the numerous seats listening to the inspiriting and charming music.

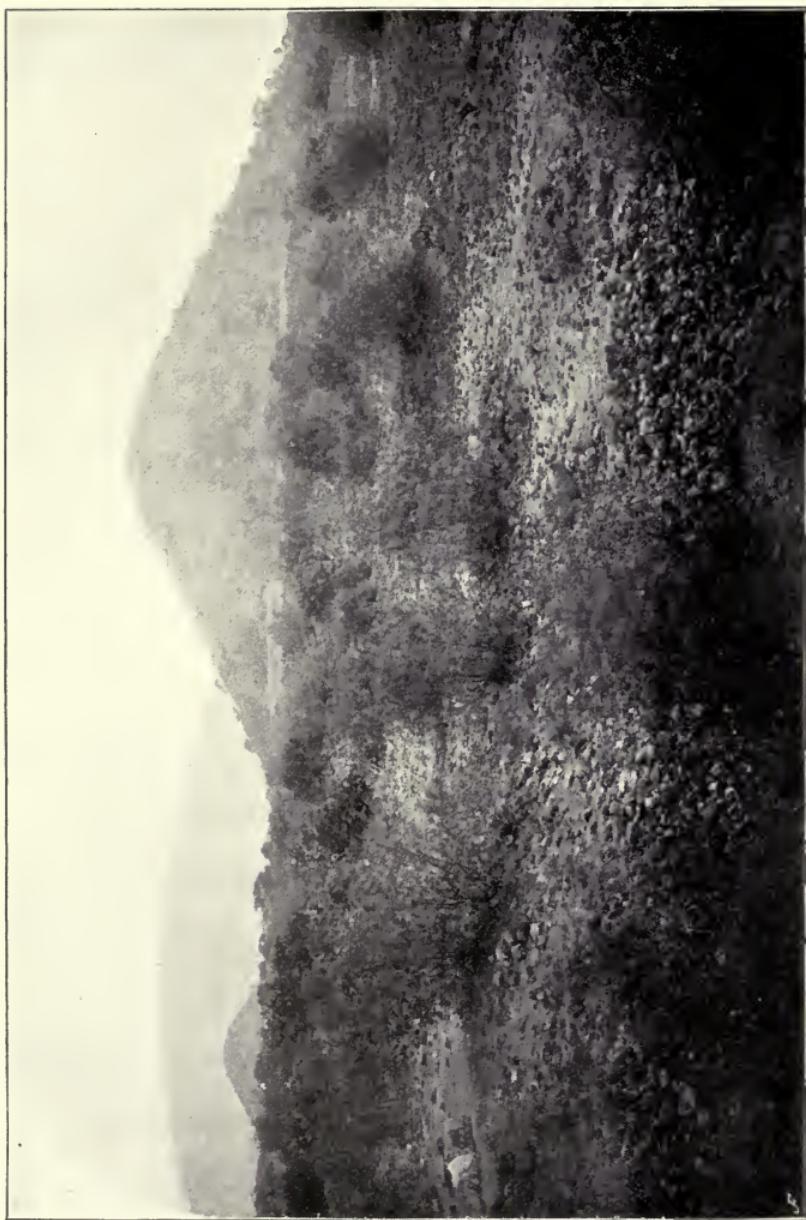
Great numbers too of the mixed races, and crowds of “Indios,” as the pure Mexican and other aboriginal races are termed; picturesque-looking men, and pretty, brilliant-eyed women, most gracefully draped in light blue cotton shawls, most becoming to their dark complexions. Among the “Indios” there are many other types, some purely Tartar and Mongolian.

All these various races seem to delight in music, and wherever bands play crowds do congregate, promenading or sitting; but one side of the plaza seemed sacred to the perambulations of the “upper” people.

Numbers of brilliantly lighted shops, of which one whole side of the square consists, tempt the promenader, as well as outdoor stalls, covered with delightful old Spanish books and innumerable charming little ornaments and models of Aztec monuments, made of the lovely Mexican onyxes and marbles, which run all along the fronts of the shops, a broad stoneway between, shaded with gay canvas awnings.

Wandering amidst these pretty and fascinating things a charming hour may be spent, listening the while to the melodious music. It ceased at 10 p.m., and we returned to our *fonda*.

Next morning, as soon as it was light, we flew to see, in the sunshine, this most charming of cities; the air balmy and scent-laden, and the plaza, with its trees, flowers, and sparkling waters, more lovely than even by moonlight.



PYRAMIDS OF SUN AND MOON—SAN JUAN DE TEOTIHUACAN. P. 174.

The exterior of the cathedral, especially as seen from the plaza, which it grandly dominates, is the most picturesque imaginable, one massive, and many lesser, domes, of most graceful form, all covered with fluted tiles, gold-coloured, or of lovely shades of amber and greenish-blue; grand and massive towers, and fine façades, in the best style of the earliest Spanish renaissance, majestically reared on beautiful green lawns, considerably elevated above the level of the plaza, to which descend several flights of broad stone steps, the whole surrounded by exceedingly handsome wrought-iron railings, picked out with gold, of great height, the several entrances guarded by magnificent iron gates wrought in with fine gilt ornamentation, each side of each gateway guarded by exquisitely wrought gilt angels, smaller gilt angels surmounting the high railings at short equal distances the whole way round, their golden pinions gracefully outspread; the effect quite charming.

This beautiful cathedral was begun in 1550, soon after the building of the city, the site of which was chosen by the Spaniards for its beauty and salubrity, no previous town or buildings having preceded it.

Tradition relates that as the cathedral builders worked, choirs of snow-white angels could be daily seen hovering in the skies high above the rising walls, waving their silvery wings, and cheering on the workers with celestial chantings; and that, in memory of these angelic favours, the city received the name of Puebla de los Angeles.

But angels of another kind must have interfered with the work during the nights, for a whole century elapsed before the beautiful cathedral stood sufficiently near completion to be consecrated to "la Santisima Reina de los Angeles," on April 18th, 1649!

The interior is one dazzling dream of beauty and magnificence, precious marbles, precious stones, immense slabs of the exquisite pearly and opalescent onyx of Mexico, silver and gold in masses and sheets, yet nothing garish in the slightest degree, all resplendently fresh and spotlessly clean, the interior of the domes admirably decorated with paintings by native artists.

The retablo of the high altar at the east end of the cruciform building is of admirably sculptured onyx; the altar-rails and huge candelabra of solid silver, and beautiful silver angels stand on each side watching over the altar with outspread silver wings of exquisite workmanship.

The central altar, under the great dome, and its massive tabernacle are marvels of beauty and lavish magnificence, wrought with precious onyx and ivory, inlaid with innumerable turquoises, emeralds, sapphires, and other gems. The coro, according to Spanish custom in the centre of the nave, is of admirable beauty and elegance, exquisitely carved stalls, inlaid with precious woods and ivory of loveliest design, the sides of the whole surmounted by a delicately wrought, graceful balustrade, entirely overlaid with the purest gold.

The exquisitely fresh brilliancy of the gold and gilding everywhere is simply dazzling, although more than 200 years old.

Above the onyx and marble walls of the coro, opening with cedar doors elaborately carved and gilt, are placed two organs entirely covered with pure gold, so gracefully built and proportioned that the effect is of the most perfect elegance and simplicity.

The wide aisles on each side of the coro are paved with precious marbles and inlaid coloured tiles, geometrically

arranged. Exquisitely decorated capillas of uniform size extend along the whole length of each aisle, from which they are divided by uniform, delicately wrought, gilt gates, of immense height, and the whole width of each chapel, but light and graceful beyond words ! the connecting walls being of spotless white marble, and the lovely creamy opalescent Mexican onyx.

The roof is elaborately carved and gilt, and innumerable angels of exquisite grace look down from the cornices with outspread wings of flaming gold.

The general effect of the whole is the most radiantly brilliant that can be conceived—dazzlingly beautiful—the extraordinarily lavish display of gold and gilding all in most perfect taste, and producing no sensation whatever of the slightest excess. A sort of earthly realization of “Jerusalem the golden !” There are beautiful paintings in addition.

The sacristy is the most gorgeous and splendid (as far as I have seen) in the world. An enormous, nearly square apartment of great height, lighted from a high dome admirably painted and gilt ; a great altar of massive onyx, ornamented with lovely angels of silver and gold ; great tables of onyx and ebony ; the walls of elaborately carved, deliciously sweet cedar wood, picked out with gold in the carvings. On three sides immense and magnificent paintings of scenes of the conquest. The floor of precious marbles ; *prie-dieux* and seats of gold, and richly embroidered Genoese velvet—in short, the most superb adjunct to a magnificent cathedral that it is possible to imagine.

Señoras are, by rights, not admitted into the sacristy, but the amiable sacristan, in consideration of my being *estranjera*, and, still more, *inglésa católica*, which mightily

astonished and pleased him, allowed me a few minutes' inspection.

The same wonderful order and spotless cleanliness reign here (where we also saw some wonderful old Spanish embroidered vestments) as in the cathedral. You can never by any chance, at any hour, enter without seeing from twenty to thirty men busily employed sweeping up every speck of dust, dusting with light feather brushes everything from roof to floor, polishing with soft leather the gilt railings and gratings, organs and balustrades, everything, in short !

Not only is the beauty of this exquisite cathedral a joy and a wonder, but also the admirable and loving care taken of it.

A high mass is sung every morning at nine, so we were fortunate enough to hear the grand organs, both exceedingly melodious and sonorous, the singing beautiful ; and after mass there was a curious and interesting ceremony of confirmation, by the bishop, of innumerable babies, carried in the arms of their proud mothers into the wide gangway, with low, carved, cedar-gilt railing, leading from the coro to the sanctuary under the dome, the while the organs played soft and solemn music, and none of the babies cried !

After several delightful hours spent examining and admiring this wonderful interior, we proceeded outside, to mount up to the top of one of the massive towers to the beautiful, many-domed roof, whence the view is gloriously magnificent.

The lovely palms and trees of the plaza beneath ; the beautiful city, of which the cathedral forms the heart, with its innumerable fortress-like churches and convents with domes of brilliant coloured tiles flashing in the sunlight ;

the Alameda, with its shady avenues along the shining river Atoyac; fine public buildings, each with its patio of flowers and palms, the rich vega all round; on one side the beautiful mountain called "Malinche," in memory of the Indian name of Doña Marina, variously styled "Malinche" and "Malintzi," and the distant pyramids of Cholula. On another side the superb snow-cone of Popocatepetl, rising high into the blue sky, a sky of that exquisitely limpid, soft blue peculiar to Mexico; and the mysterious Ixtaccihuatl, as ever, shrouded in misty, shining cloud.

The roof of the cathedral is exquisitely picturesque, with its numerous domes covered with lovely fluted, coloured tiles, and the quaint inequalities and stone terraces at various heights, and sculptured stone and marble balustrades.

At last we were obliged to fly to catch the 2 p.m. train to Jalapa by Inter-oceanic line.

The whole route was delightful, admirably cultivated, and more and more grand as we entered the great range of high mountains; tremendous precipices, with gorgeously wooded valleys deep down beneath; superb effects of mist and cloud, mysteriously veiling, then revealing, the sublimely glorious views.

The sun had set before we arrived at this incomparably charming little mountain town, perched at a height of 4,300 feet, surrounded by the loveliest and richest meadows and exquisite woods, above which towers the indescribable glory and beauty of the Pico de Orizaba, dwarfing the memory of the great Popocatepetl into the veriest insignificance!

But all this we only dimly saw as we walked, in the deep gloaming, up the steep streets past the lovely Alameda, on a

high eminence commanding all the unutterable surrounding glories, the usual military band playing in the midst of glittering fountains and sweetest flowers, and where the Jalapan women, famed for their surpassing beauty and grace, draped in their delicate lace mantillas, pose to be admired, on to a very good little clean and new hotel, also perched on a crag, with a flat roof to which you ascend to see a view that, as the moon rises, simply holds you speechless with the glory of its divine and transcendent beauty!

At Mexico city we had been warned against Vera Cruz as a hotbed of yellow fever, but were most anxious, if possible, to go there; and, by good luck, had met in the train a Mexican doctor who assured me that it was quite safe, the epidemic, which had raged in the spring, having passed away from Vera Cruz since the beginning of summer, spreading upward into the mountainous country, to which it rarely climbs, in the direction of Cordoba and Fortin.

Very many days one ought to spend at this most enchanting Jalapa (where, by the way, "jalap" is made from an indigenous plant, and largely exported to Europe), healthy and lovely, where yellow fever never comes, the favourite summer resort from all parts of Mexico, and the valued refuge of dwellers in "tierra caliente."

But, alas! our time was limited, and a few hours only, next morning, were we able, by rising before dawn, to give to the marvellous beauty of this enchanted spot, and having decided to go to Vera Cruz, we had to take the only morning train.

No words can describe the superb and unutterably impressive grandeur and beauty of the scenery between Jalapa and Vera Cruz! Never for a moment is the sight

lost of the snow-crowned Orizaba, which, as the track winds to the plain, presents itself in varied aspects, one more gloriously beautiful and magnificent than another.

Through glittering forests of palm, banana, coffee, india-rubber, bamboo, hibiscus one mass of pink and scarlet blossom, pomegranate, and giant mahogany, festooned and garlanded with exquisite varieties of orchid and golden alamanda, dazzling in radiant sunlight and heavy with perfume.

We had now descended into the "tierra caliente" (hot land), and the atmosphere became every moment hotter and damper, and the vegetation denser. Butterflies of every brilliant hue, but mostly golden-yellow, and delicate humming-birds, like flashes of coloured light, darted among the flowers, from which they suck the honey like bees. The trees became simply one matted coverlet of flowers, their prevalent colours golden-yellow, white, and various lovely shades of blue, rarely reds or pinks ; the butterflies the same, but the humming-birds affect every conceivable delicate and gorgeous tint, all, as it were, illuminated and on fire !

Occasionally we passed a small clearance in the dense jungle for a conical Indian hut, picturesquely roofed with banana and palm leaves, or maguey and plantain. At last we reached the flat coast land : miles and miles of dense, steaming jungle, vaporous clouds of bluish mist lightly hovering in the fiery sunshine ; here and there large spaces cleared for ranchos and stockaded gardens, till, after five hours of the enchantment of a magic dream, we reached the partly grassy, partly sandy, semicircular plain stretching to the sparkling waters of the Gulf, and flat sandy shore on which is seated Vera Cruz, "Queen City of the Gulf," a few miles distant from the site of the landing of Cortés, where he intrenched his camp and founded the

Villa Rica de la Vera Cruz, afterwards abandoned for the present city of Vera Cruz.

I may say here that I entirely differ from the unfavourable opinion generally expressed by books and travellers in regard to this little town.

There are parts of it delightfully picturesque—its incomparable alameda, with superb avenue of most graceful cocoa palms, under which you rest on marble seats, listening to the dreamy, musical splash of the lovely central flower-wreathed fountain, the blue shining sea beyond ; numerous quaint mosque-like buildings, domed with fluted red-tiled roofs ; fragrant groves of lemon and orange and citron trees, with here and there brilliant gardens full of tropical trees and plants, and fountains rising high.

Then the charming plaza, famous for magnificent old Indian laurels and sago and date palms, shading the picturesque old cathedral. All this I thought quite charming, and with a distinctive character of its own ; and the delicious hot sun, not at all too hot, for it was tempered by a delightful breeze, and the shining sea-waves musically breaking on the gold-amber sands.

The hour of our arrival being 1 p.m., we first ran to the Hotel Mexicano, close to the plaza, to take rooms. The sea looked exquisitely tempting, but we were assured that a *single* sea-bath here was inevitably followed by yellow fever ! the only safe way being to take no less than three baths, at intervals of two or three hours, after which you might consider yourself acclimatized and in a state to bathe *ad libitum*.

This (whether true or not) being impracticable, we had some tea and eggs instead, and hurried out to the plaza, where we sat in the shade listening to the gentle murmur of the sunlit fountain rising and falling in its wide marble

basin, brilliant flowers all round, and delicate scents of lemon and orange blossom, till the sacristan had finished his siesta and was disposed to show us the old cathedral and other buildings of which he kept the keys, and the absurd tomb in which General Santa Anna (afterwards President) ordered one of his legs to be buried with pomp and military honours, after it had been shot off during an engagement with the French near Vera Cruz.

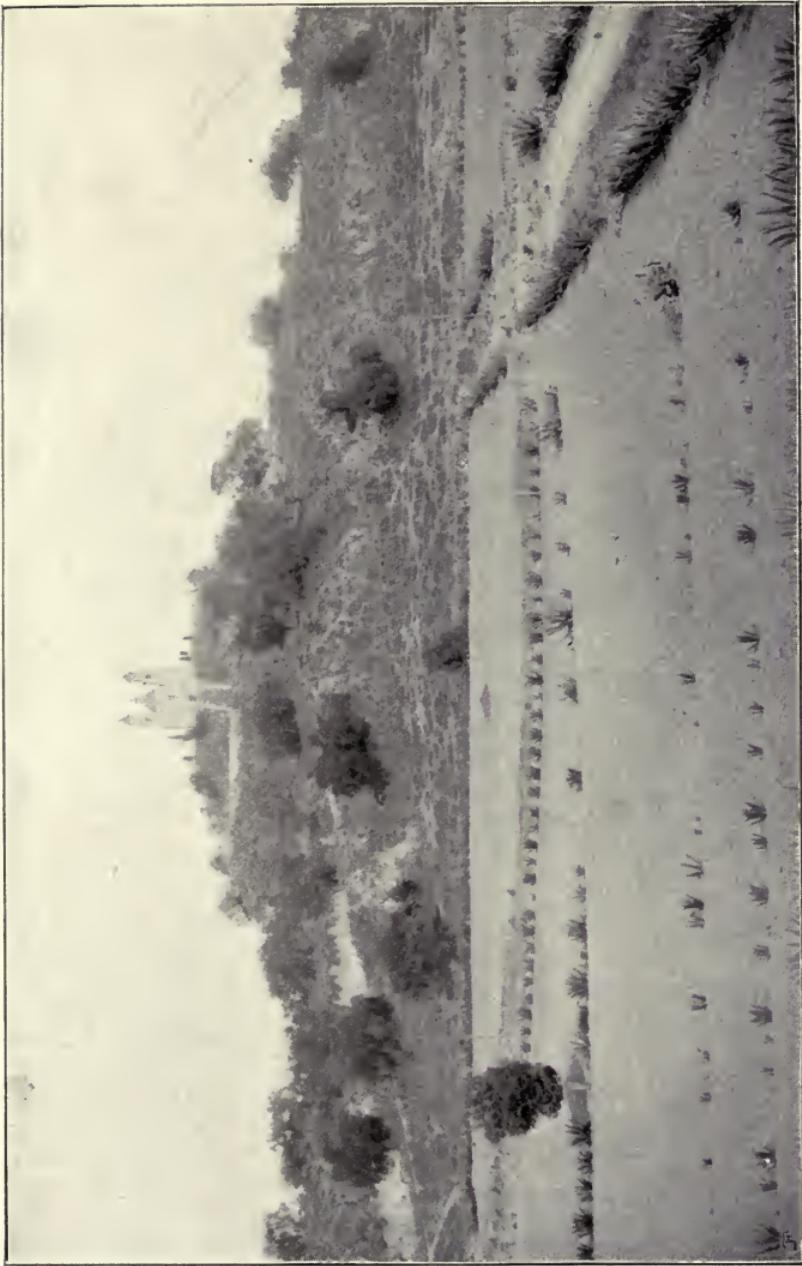
Then to the sands, where troops were being manœuvred ; to a fine hospital into which an old fortress had been turned, standing on grassy mounds airily overlooking the sea ; and various churches with flowery patios ; and an extensive park planted with graceful pepper trees.

In addition to prettier birds, the streets are full of scavengers, in the shape of small black vultures, that walk about, picking up everything and keeping them in a state of perfect cleanliness. When their appetites are momentarily satisfied, they sit in rows on the housetops, their eyes glaring in their hideous featherless heads.

The remainder of the evening I spent in the lovely Alameda, lingering till the sun had set, and the soft radiance of the moon and, finally, the electric light had illuminated its lovely palms and sparkling fountains. Then back to the hotel, which is certainly not charming, and the main reason, probably, why people decry the charms of Vera Cruz.

Afterwards we heard that the Mexican Railway Company possessed a very neat little inn in the plaza, to which we ought to have gone. However, the "Mexicano," with its large airy restaurant, gave more opportunity for insight into the manners and customs of the upper class of natives, who seemed to congregate there for all their meals, and whose talk it was amusing to listen to.

The atmosphere by night felt much hotter and more oppressive than by day, the breeze having dropped, and clouds of mosquitoes floated in through the open windows. These pests we only saw in the "tierra caliente," never in any other part of Mexico, and we found that they could be effectually kept at bay by the use of Calvert's "Anti-mosquito Soap," a real specific, as we invariably afterwards found; they might, and did, buzz round, but never bit.



PYRAMID OF CHOLULA. P. 173.

CHAPTER XV.

Paso del Macho—Cordoba—Fortin—Barranca de Métlac—Ori-zaba—Esperanza—Puebla—Cholula.

NEXT morning (November 22nd) we started from the Mexicano Railway estacion at 6.30 a.m. by a serene and lovely sunrise. A short distance of sandy and grassy plain, after which (as from Jalapa) many miles of jungle and the wondrous vegetation, flowers, and birds of the steaming “tierra caliente;” slowly and gradually rising to a height of 1,500 feet at Paso del Macho, where the mountainous glories of the ascent begin, and where the tremendously powerful “Fairlie” engine is substituted for the ordinary locomotive.

The train winds in endless curves, up the steep gradient—at a foot’s pace, luckily, so that there is time to see well—crossing wild gorges on curved bridges supported by trestles at fearful and dizzy heights, the slopes of the mountains covered with glorious vegetation; giant mahogany, zapote, rosewood, and cedar trees almost smothered in brilliant festooned masses of orchids, the air heavy with delicious aroma and perfume; the mountain-chains rising in stupendous masses above all this glory of foliage and flowers. Divine little humming-birds darting about, like coloured flashes of flame! bigger birds, feathered in every hue of the rainbow; over the Atoyac river, with its precipitous falls shaded with exquisite verdure; stopping from

time to time at little stations filled with picturesque groups of Mexican women in their graceful blue draperies, carrying baskets brimming over with every variety of gorgeous and delicious fruit, which they offer for a few cents, with soft and caressing little cries of “ Niño ! niña ! ” to attract attention—oranges, citrons, pineapples, bananas, pomegranates, grapes, figs, mango-manilla, and many other tempting and exquisite fruits that we had never before seen or heard of—also pulqué, which did not tempt. On, through fields of sugar-cane, dazzlingly light-green ; tobacco, plantains, coffee and pineapple plantations ; across the Rio Séco, on another of those fearful, unprotected bridges, till we reach the charming little Ciudad of Cordoba, where, not only wonderful fruits, but also the most exquisite flowers, were offered by the usual crowd of picturesque natives ; great bouquets of the most magnificent gardenias for two cents, lovely roses, orchids, jasmine, every kind of delicious flower ; but here, alas, just where there was most temptation, we could take nothing for fear of the terrible “ vomito ” (yellow fever) which, like small-pox, seems—unknown in these climes till then—to have followed in the wake of white men.

So, mindful of the warning of the friendly doctor, we closed our windows and sat patiently in the train till, in due time, it moved on.

For some time we had been coming into full sight of the great Pico de Orizaba (18,250 feet high, the highest of the North American mountains), towering its radiant dome of silver high into the soft blue skies, held up aloft, as it were, by mighty walls of rock, giant precipices, and chains of peaked massive mountains : soft, deep blue, vapoury mists playing and floating over their rugged crags, and the steaming forests of tropical vegetation beneath.

Through rich meadows and gardens, with here and there an Indian hut, or rancho ; slowly creeping along, winding and curving, till we reach the absolutely superb point of view of lovely Fortin, where, alas, contrary to custom, the terrible “ vomito ” was rife, and we fancied that a sort of sickly sweetness seemed to mingle with the heavy fragrance of the scented air.

Again we closed our windows, and resisted, of course, fruits and flowers as tempting as those of Cordoba.

We soon moved on, the scene every moment more inexpressibly beautiful ; but the track risky and dangerous, along narrow rocky ledges with not an inch to spare, edging frightful precipices; across long, unprotected trestle-bridges with the sensation of a tight rope in the air, till we come to the famous and truly awful Barranca de Métlac, across which, over the broad, glistening river Métlac deep down below, the track describes a horse-shoe on a bridge 100 feet high, of 9 spans on a curve of 323 feet radius—along the dizzy and unprotected summit of which the train carefully creeps at the slowest of snail’s pace—the slim and slender supports of the narrow erection swaying and vibrating visibly under the strain of its heavy weight : a real *mauvais quart-d’heure* for persons with or without nerves ! At last it is past, and on we go, winding like a snake up the steep barranca ; silvery cascades and crystal streams on every side, shaded by delicate ferns, lovely foliage and flowery creepers ; till we find ourselves on the summit of the gorge, in a fairy valley of dazzling green —its exquisite verdure and idyllic loveliness the more lovely for the wild ranges of beetling crag and huge precipitous mountain that encircle it—its northern rocky mass towering to the heavens, crowned by that mighty silver dome whose far-off, mysterious, radiant beauty seemed

like some vague distant dreamy presentment of the long ago visioned “Great White Throne.”

In this lovely and peaceful valley, in sunny, flowery meadowland, nestles the little town of Orizaba at the foot of the stupendous crags above which sits enthroned the incomparable and solitary majesty of that glorious “Shining One”—as the Greeks named *their* unrivalled Hill. Tropical trees shade its streets and plazas, and we hear its church-bells musically chiming and re-echoing amid the hills.

The churches are venerable memorials of Spanish rule, and are said to be beautiful and to contain many paintings by the famous Mexican painter, Barranco, a native of this inspiring and wondrous spot.

We longed to see it all, but the train only waited an hour, the station nearly a mile from the city, and it was deemed imprudent to stay there the night, only eleven miles beyond the actual yellow fever centre. So we walked about, seeing all we could from various points of view; and, to our exceeding regret, put off to some problematical future day a further insight into this realm of unutterably glorious beauty.

The clanging bell of the locomotive recalled us to the train, which we had to run to catch, and on we went; soon reaching the barranca of the “Infernillo,” in the yawning depths of which the Rio Blanco calmly pursues its tranquil flow, unmindful of the overhanging, huge, and menacing crags, over which wonderful feats of engineering lead to the valley called “la Joya” (jewel), a wide expanse of smiling pastoral beauty, infinitely lovely, dominated on one side by the ever supremely-glorious “Shining One”; the bases of the lower ranges fringed with noble pines and cedars, and, in the opposing distance, blue shadowy ridges and dense, richly tinted forests.

On we pass, rising out of the valley, higher and higher, the vegetation no longer tropical; but the fruits of the “tierra caliente” still presented with those of the “tierra-templada,” at the picturesque little red-roofed town of Maltrata, from whence the steepness of the ascent is such, that sixteen miles of snake-like curves are required to reach Boca del Monte, only 2,000 feet exactly above. Through tunnels cut in the solid rock, across more fearful bridges, till Esperanza is reached, 7,980 feet above sea, where the monster “Fairlie” engine, having completed its arduous climb is detached and left to take the next train down, an ordinary locomotive substituted for it, whilst the passengers eat an excellent luncheon at the railway restaurant, the tables simply groaning under great dishes filled with every sort of delicious fruit.

We were now on the high plateau overlooking the far-famed “Cumbres,” from which descend the magnificent natural terraces to the flat land coasting the gulf—up which we have just so laboriously climbed; and as we speed along, on more or less level ground, we still see in the distance that radiant mighty dome of silver, shining for ever, alone and unrivalled.

We pass, for a time, through a sandy region, almost hidden for the clouds of choking dust which penetrate into every nook and cranny—happily, not for long—then endless plantations in circular rows of immense agaves, the beautiful Sierra Malinche taking curiously different shapes as we wind past it, and come into sight of the familiar Popocatepetl and Ixtaccihuatl, looking strangely mean and small, possessed as we were, eyes heart and soul, by the unutterably impressive and mysterious splendour of the mighty Pico de Orizaba.

At Apizaco we changed trains, and took a branch line

to Puebla de los Angeles, where we arrived towards sunset, at once hastening to the plaza for an evening view of the great cathedral and its lovely shining aisles illuminated by the red-gold rays of the setting sun; its peaceful beauty in perfect tune and harmony with the haunting vision of that white, ethereal, ever "Shining One." . . .

When the cathedral had closed after sunset, we walked to the opposite side of the plaza, at which we had been told we should find an "excellent American" hotel, and thought we would try it. It did not look particularly inviting, but we asked to see rooms, and were requested to go up in the "elevator," the only one we ever saw in Mexico.

We entered, and saw the oddest thing of the kind imaginable! It consisted of a small room, with tables and chairs. With infinite difficulty and strain the whole construction began moving bodily up with loud groanings and creakings by the strangest kind of laboured wheel machinery, at such a pace that it took exactly twenty minutes to rise one story.

Of course, having once started, it was impossible to get out, but when it did stop we said "Never again!" and got down again as fast as we could by the only staircase—a queer sort of ladder that could only be reached by creeping along a narrow ledge with a banister a foot high overhanging the patio—almost more alarming than the bridges across the barrancas!

The worthy Spanish proprietor, who was quite shocked at our not appreciating his famous "elevator," assured us that we should find excellent rooms at the hotel "Francia," next door, also under his management.

So we went to look, and found it quite nice and comfortable, and so much nearer the cathedral, just opening

on to the plaza, that we preferred it to the more distant, if more magnificent, Hotel Jardin.

Next morning, before seven, after a good breakfast at the restaurant attached to the "Francia," G. went to Cholula, and I to the lovely cathedral to revel again in its peerless beauties, and was so fortunate as to come in for a very impressive Requiem high mass, beautifully sung, and the two organs, very fine instruments, admirably played, the whole effect grand and harmonious. That infinitely soothing and inspiring cry—so often repeated—rising so magnificently above the wailings of human loss and woe like the poet's cry of hope, "Non omnis moriar," "Non morietur in æternum!"

After it was all over, at about 8.30, I went up the tower again to the top of the roof, which is so wonderfully picturesque, to make a few sketches of its richly-coloured domes and vaultings, and of bits of the exquisitely lovely scenery all round, requesting the good old sacristan to come back and let me out by the tower, the door of which he said he had to lock, at 11.30, which he amiably promised to do.

The weather was, as usual, lovely, and the time passed like a dream, till I suddenly discovered that the three hours had long gone by, and no sacristan to be seen!

The door at the top of the winding staircase above the great clockworks in the tower—the only outlet—was securely locked, so there was nothing for it but to exercise patience and wait—a thing not very difficult to do in such enchanting surroundings!

So I calmly proceeded with my sketches till the now vertical, tropical sun forced me to put up my umbrella.

Hour after hour passed, and nobody came. At last, when I was beginning to think myself completely for-

gotten, and to see visions of a bleached skeleton found after many years, the ponderous key turned, and out came the sacristan, all smiles and amiability, calmly asking was I ready to come down, it being now past "*las tres?*" and when I reproachfully assured him that I had said, "*á las once y medio*" (11.30) he only smiled benignly and shook his head.

However, down we went, the huge clock clanging half-past three, deafening us as we passed under its vast machinery and great bells.

The "Francia" being so conveniently near, and the restaurant of course always open, I ran in for a cup of tea, and then out again to visit many interesting and much-decorated churches, particularly that of San Francisco, built for the Indians and always full of dusky worshippers; the Dominican monastery—its church one mass of gilding and carvings, with a fine cloister;—the Carmelite, containing two Murillos; and "Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe," more modern, with a façade covered with coloured plaques and two lovely towers, and a portico of white marble, the effect of which is peculiar, but extremely harmonious and good. It stands on a high terrace, commanding a magnificent view.

I also visited several fine hospitals, spotlessly clean and well kept.

The streets, and the whole city, are extraordinarily clean; and never, there, or anywhere, do you come across anything like malodours.

In the evening again to the plaza, rummaging among the book-booths for old Spanish authors and Mexican-Spanish literature, of which there is much that is interesting.

Next morning I went early, by rail eight miles, to Cholula, a small and very picturesque ciudad of 5,000 inhabitants,

anciently the "Holy City" of the Aztecs, but built by long-previous races; described by Cortés as full of magnificent teocallis and palaces, and no less than 20,000 houses substantially built of stone within the city walls, and as many without.

It was dedicated to Quetzalcoatl (plumed serpent), god of the air, and representative of the planet Venus, whose black statue, resplendent with gold and jewels, and decorated with two crosses, stood enshrined in the magnificent teocalli erected on the broad platform of the prehistoric Mound—still the great object of archaeological, as in those days of religious, pilgrimage—built in the form of a truncated pyramid.

The enormous square base—1,423 feet in length (double that of the great Pyramid of Ghizeh) covered a space of 44 acres, and was built in four diminishing terraces, the uppermost platform measuring more than one acre—its square sides each 165 feet long; it was anciently surmounted by the great teocalli dedicated to the god of air—destroyed and replaced, after the conquest, by the still extant church of "la Virgen de los Remedios"—the front of which commands a superb view of the rich plain and the great volcanoes, including the glory of Orizaba.

The terraces of this famous pyramid are now so overgrown with vegetation as to be almost obliterated, but here and there can be distinguished; and a stone-paved winding road to the summit discovers, in its cuttings, alternate strata of clay and brick; but whether the interior of the mound was natural, or wholly artificial, is not known.

The Pyramids of the "Sun" and "Moon" at San Juan de Teotihuacan, "City of the Gods," although smaller than the famous one of Cholula, are equally interesting, and

were deemed by Von Humboldt to have been of entirely artificial construction, consisting of blocks of basalt and trachyte, and to show traces of one or more inner chambers, like the pyramids of Ghizeh.

In their general build and aspect Von Humboldt thought them analogous to those near Sakhara, in Egypt, and to the Temple of Belus at Babylon. Twenty-five smaller pyramids surround the two greater ones, which are led up to by what was called the "Road of Death," each side of which teems with ruins of pyramidal buildings believed to have been used as dwellings for the living as well as for the dead.

The Pyramid of the Sun was about 760 feet square at the base, and 216 feet high, built in three lessening square terraces, the highest 75 feet square, crowned with a colossal statue of the sun. Here the kings of the neighbouring states came to be crowned. Immense quantities of little terra cotta heads, of Chinese, Assyrian, and Ethiopian type have been, and still are, found in the immediate vicinity.

The Conquistadores are silent as to these pyramids, although they marched past them on the "Noche triste," and the battle of Otumba, a week later, was fought in full view of them.

Dim tradition, at the date of the Conquest, alleged that in long-previous ages a great and benevolent being, of white complexion and long black hair and beard, had wandered into the midst of the barbarian dwellers, and had spent twenty years in teaching them the arts of agriculture and civilization, and in instituting Monotheism, and religious sacrifices of only fruits and flowers; after which he had wandered forth towards the east and disappeared beyond the sea, after promising that one day men of his race should return and reign over the land of Anahuac.



"PYRAMID OF THE SUN; AND ROAD OF DEATH"—SAN JUAN DE TEOTIHUACAN. P. 174.

His memory was deified under the name of Quetzalcoatl, god of the air, and honoured by the Aztecs with the hideous human sacrifices he had abhorred and forbidden; 6,000 human victims being annually sacrificed at his shrine, and their ghastly remains served up for food at the religious feasts of the worshippers.

Two other pyramids, of similar form and structure, are extant in Cholula, both very much smaller.

Cortés, writing to Charles V., distinguishes this city as the only one in Mexico where "troops of beggars were to be seen, reminding him of his native Spain," resulting from the constant pilgrimages, the expenses of which reduced many of the pilgrims to a state of beggary.

After returning to Puebla, one more visit to the cathedral—which dwells in memory as one of the loveliest on earth: certainly in point of decoration. Then, in the late afternoon back to Mexico city, to the Hotel Jardin.

CHAPTER XVI.

Museo Nacional—Aztec Calendar—Palemke Cross—Indian Paintings—Texcoco—Netzahualcoyotl.

NEXT morning (Sunday, November 25th) to the high mass at the cathedral—how poor it looked after the exquisite lines and decoration of that of Puebla! Then at 10 till 12, a final visit to the National Museum, before quitting which I must mention a few of its principal contents.

The most remarkable of these monuments is the gigantic one known as the “Aztec Calendar Stone,” or, “Rock of the Sun”—a marvellous proof and record of the astronomical knowledge of this strangely civilized yet barbarian nation.

Its completion and inauguration dates from the Aztec year, “Two House,” 1481 A.D.

It was then set up as a “Sacrificial Stone” by the reigning king, Axayacatl, in pursuance of his vow to erect monuments of beauty for the decoration of the great Teocalli, the building of which he had completed a few years previously in honour of the god of war, Huitzilopochtli.

He ordered (so says the historian, Tezozomoc, a son of the Emperor Cuitlahuac) in the year “Twelve Rabbit” (1478 A.D.) a great rock to be torn from the mountain of Coyoacau and conveyed to the city of Tenochtitlau, there to be

sculptured into an image of the sun surrounded with their zodiacal signs.

The huge block was dragged along wooden rollers by 5,000 men, but on reaching the bridge of Xoloc, across the lake Texcoco, to the city, its enormous weight broke through, and it fell into the lake, whence no man dared drag it.

Upon which the king, being wroth, ordered a second rock to be brought, and having immensely strengthened the bridge, it was conveyed safely across and placed in the hands of the sculptors, who in three years had completed its decoration ; after which it was placed in the Teocalli, and its dedication celebrated with magnificent ceremonies and frightful sacrifices, in the presence of all the kings of the neighbouring countries, King Axayacatl inaugurating the event by himself tearing out the hearts of fifty-two of the principal captives—728 in number, collected for the sacrifice—offering them, still palpitating, to the Sun, then casting them into the great sculptured vases placed at the feet of the god of war, leaving the remainder of the victims to be similarly dealt with by the thirteen priests in succession.

After which, according to invariable custom, several great anthropophagic feasts were held, at which Axayacatl, in his devout zeal, ate the flesh and drank the blood of the sacrificed to such excess that he shortly afterwards died of the surfeit.

The Aztecs, it may be here remarked, are not to be classed exactly on a par with ordinary cannibals, their feasts of human flesh having been entirely of a religious character and restricted to consumption of victims offered on the sacrificial stone. And it is said of Moctezuma II., in proof of his superior civilization, that he could only

eat flesh of this description after it had been very nicely cooked.

Soon after the Conquest, the first Archbishop of Mexico, Zumarraga, caused many of the Aztec monuments and idols to be broken into pieces, and the rest to be buried underground, lest the sight of them should encourage the aborigines in resistance to Christianity.

It is believed that many of these important monuments still lie buried in the depths beneath the plaza and cathedral, awaiting some future systematic search.

Strange to say, this sacrificial "Calendar Stone" is not described or mentioned by any of the original "Conquistadores," and therefore may possibly have been buried out of sight by the Aztecs themselves, as well as their treasure, during the final siege.

Be that as it may, it somehow cropped up, by earthquake or otherwise, in 1551, to the great disedification of the then Archbishop, Montufar, who looked upon it as a work of the devil, and speedily had it re-buried, after which it was forgotten, and its final restoration to the light of day effected as late as 1790, when it was discovered whilst levelling the Plaza Mayor, and, by permission of the viceroy, at once built—as an ornament and valuable curiosity—into the base of the south-western tower of the cathedral, where it remained exposed to sight, and also to the elements, till removed to the Museo Nacional in 1885.

This huge monolith is called the "Aztec Clock" by the Indians, as the aborigines of all America were termed by their old-world conquerors and the earlier discoverers, who for many years remained under the impression that they had reached the eastern extremity of the continent of Asia or its adjacent islands—the rich "spice isles" of India being the constant object of their search.

Columbus himself lived and died in this erroneous belief.

To return to the great "Calendar Stone." It consists of a nearly circular mass of fine-grained basalt, 11 feet 8 inches in diameter, weighing, according to the calculation of Von Humboldt, 24,400 kilograms, elaborately and beautifully carved, with a central image of "Tonatiuh" (the Sun) surrounded by symbolical representations of the chief facts of their ancient calendar and cycles of time; the dates of the vernal and autumnal equinoxes, the summer and winter solstices, the apparent movements of the sun and of the planet Venus, the meridian of Tenochtitlan, east and west lines representing the tropics of Cancer and Capricorn, and many historic dates.

From time immemorial, the Aztec civil year had consisted of eighteen months of twenty days each, each month divided into four weeks of five days each, a total of 360 days, the last day of each week being market day—an arrangement of time slightly superior to that of the ancient Roman Calendar, which gave 355 days to its year, with an occasional intercalary month, producing, like the Egyptian year of 365 days, the utmost confusion in all agricultural and other arrangements.

In the year "One Flint" (29 b.c.) the Aztec astrologers assembled to reform their calendar, in their ancient city of Huehuetaapallan, "old Earth-paint"—the site of which is a mystery—supposed by some antiquarians to have been the huge mass of shapeless ruins still to be seen at Casas-Grandes at the junction of the rivers Gila and Colorado in Arizona, and by others, somewhere in the great Mound Region of the Valley of the Mississippi.

The continuation of the migratory movement of the Aztecs southward of this city—wherever may have been

its exact site—took place in the year 231 A.D., as recorded on the Calendar Stone.

To return to the astronomical *séance* in Huehuetapallan, presided by the chief astrologer Cipax, in whose honour the first day of each month was named "Cipatetli," "dawn"—the Aztec *savants* corrected their ancient calendar by making their first intercalation of five days at the end of each year—their year beginning on March 1st, and their day at 6 a.m.

These intercalary days, February 24th to 28th inclusive, were considered unlucky and "useless," and were ordered to be spent in sacrifice, fasting and prayer.

This reformation took place almost contemporaneously with that of the ancient Roman Calendar by Julius Cæsar (46 B.C.), who, aided by the Egyptian astronomer Sosigenes, introduced the correction now known as a leap year in every fourth, termed "bissextile," the sixth day before the Kalends of March being reckoned twice.

The "Tropical" year, however, owing to the Precession, or retrograde movement, of the Equinoxes, only amounts to 365 days, 5 hours, 48 minutes, 49·7 seconds of mean solar time: about 20 minutes less than the "Sidereal" year; consequently, the Julian reckoning of 365 days, 6 hours—a yearly excess of about 11 minutes—produced an error of one day too many in every 134 years; which, by the year 1900, will have amounted to 13 days, and which, in 1582, had reached the sum of 10 days: corrected in that year by Pope Gregory XIII., who suppressed the superfluous 10 days by decreeing that October 5th, 1582, should be reckoned as the 15th, at the same time providing against the recurrence of future error by an elaborate rearrangement of leap years.

This "New Style" having been enacted by Papal Bull, was "severely ignored" by the newly Protestant countries of Europe which, one would have thought, might have sufficiently vindicated their independence of the Papacy by choosing some other month of that, or the following year, for the suppression of the supernumerary days, following the example of France, which decreed them to be abolished in the following December 10th to 20th, 1582.

Our country, "as every schoolboy knows," remained obdurate till the year 1752, when "New Style" was adopted by special Act of Parliament, suppressing the eleven days (to which the error had by that time amounted) by enacting that September 3rd of that year should be reckoned as the 14th, a decree much resented in London by the people, who assembled "in their thousands" and mobbed the ministry with threats and cries of "Give us back our eleven days!" by the same Act, the 1st day of the year being transferred from March 25th to January 1st.

To-day, the Julian "Old Style" continues to be observed by the Russian and Greek nations only—a piece of benighted foolishness that causes themselves and others much inconvenience.

The Aztecs measured time by "cycles," each comprising fifty-two years, divided into four quarters of thirteen years each; and their system of numbers was based upon multiples of four.

The names of the years were "Rabbit," "Reed," "Flint," "House"—constantly repeated in the same order, each distinguished by a separate accompaniment of dots—beginning with one dot, and ending with thirteen—the 1st series commencing with "1 Rabbit;" the 2nd with "1 Reed;" the 3rd "1 Flint;" and the 4th "1 House"—each year being thus clearly designated; and the cycles were distin-

guished by hieroglyphical signs of "sheafs" or "bundles" of reeds, tied together.

The priests had a secret and sacred calendar of their own, consisting of a year of 260 days, divided into 20 months of 13 days each, based upon the apparent movements of the planet Venus, which was identified, in their worship, with the god of air, Quetzalcoatl; by which they regulated fasts and festivals, and astrological calculations.

The last day of each grand cycle was spent in fear and lamentation, in expectation of the possible end of the world, the death of the Sun, and extinction of the human race—already, as they believed, four times destroyed and restored—but doomed to irrevocable destruction by a fifth catastrophe.

So the sacred fire in the Teocallis, and every house, was let die out, and furniture, utensils and clothes destroyed, as of no further use.

Three hours before midnight, the priests led a huge procession to the hill of Huixachtla, six miles south of Tenochtitlan, on the summit of which, at the moment the Pleiades touched their zenith, new fire was kindled on the breast of a chosen prisoner of war—upon the flaming up of which, in sight of the entire valley, feasts and rejoicings inaugurated a new cycle of life.

Their last celebration of this rite took place in the year 1507 A.D., three years later than the landing in Cuba, from Spain, of the future extinguisher of their liberties.

In the year 1454 A.D., the Aztec astrologers met once more to reform their calendar; and particularly to transfer the first day of each cycle from "1 Rabbit" to "2 Reed," the former being condemned owing to the occurrence of great droughts and famines during a series of years begun under that symbol, as chronicled on a basaltic cylinder in

the Museo, carved in the form of a bundle of reeds, 33 in number, representing the 33 cycles then elapsed since the foundation of Huehuetlapallan.

In the course of their calculations for computing these corrections as far back as the first of these cycles, the astronomers discovered that they had gained 13 days upon the "tropical" year; and, to correct the error, did, in 1474, what Gregory XIII. did in 1582, namely, suppressed the excess.

And to prevent future error, enacted the simple and efficacious expedient of the addition of 25 days to every 104 years.

And 104 comprising two of their cycles, they added 13 days to the 1st cycle, and 12 to the 2nd, and so on. The result being an adjustment of time so accurately perfect, that more than 5,000 years would have to elapse before the necessity for a fresh suppression of one entire day—an extraordinary proof of the astronomical knowledge and dexterity of the Aztecs, who, as far as is known, worked without astronomical instruments, yet calculated a result so greatly superior to that of the one hundred and eight years later "Gregorian reformation," which admits of the error of one entire day in a period of nearly 4,000 years. The Aztec calendar, in some respects, bears a striking resemblance to that of the Chinese, and some other Asiatic nations; and the "Sacred Calendar" of the priests presented correspondences with the Sothic or dog-star period of the Egyptians and Persians.

The collection in the Museum is as remarkable for objects of extraordinary beauty and artistic refinement, as for others of the extremest barbarity and most grotesque hideousness.

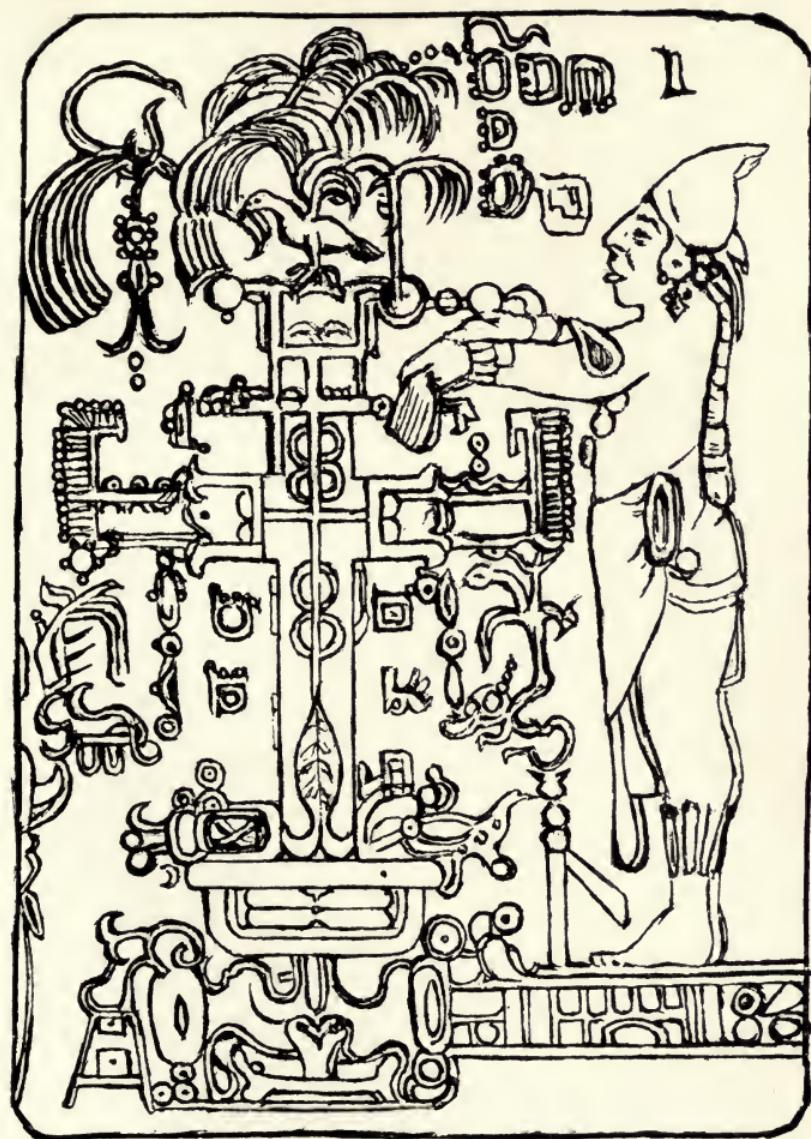
Foremost among the latter, is the gigantic "Woman-

serpent," "Citreocoatl," popularly named "Coatlicue," a monolith measuring 8 feet high, with a diameter of 5 feet, representing "Mother Earth and Water"—the head that of a huge snake twining round the woman's form, which is clothed in a loathsome tangle of snakes, decorated with tassels and feathers. She has many hands and a death's head between. The back of this monster is thought to represent Teoyaotlatohua, the "god of violent death," equally adorned with snakes, skulls, and many hands.

Two statues of the goddess of death are equally frightful—one, a woman draped with snakes, her head a skull, inlaid with magnificent turquoises, sapphires and emeralds; great claws for hands with which she is clutching at her victims; the other, a woman with a scalped head, the skull bare, also clutching the air with great claws. Next to her are two grotesquely hideous "waxing" and "waning" moons, with eyes surrounded by huge black circles and enormous tusks for teeth: and the almost identical representation of the son of the moon "Tlaloc," god of the rain, thunder and lightning—an important deity, at whose shrine infants and children were, many times a year, sacrificed with the usual horrible ceremony.

The terrible god of war, Huitzilopochtli, to whom were offered such countless human victims, on the other hand, is represented by a far less repulsive effigy. Around him are placed innumerable huge receptacles, elaborately and beautifully carved, for human hearts; and immense vases, into which the blood of the victims poured from a deep channel cut in the sacrificial stone, and which was produced at the ensuing feasts to be quaffed as nectar.

If any captive had given proof of extraordinary valour, he was given a chance for his life by being allowed to encounter—armed only with one short sword—one after



PALEMKE CROSS. P. 189.

another, seven better-armed gladiators, himself further handicapped by being tied by one leg to the "gladiatorial stone." In the almost impossible event of victory over the whole seven, he was given his life and liberty, and loaded with gifts and honours; but if worsted, instantly dragged, dead or alive, to the sacrificial stone, where the priests awaited to tear out his heart.

Frequently these unhappy victims (almost always prisoners of war) were subjected to the cruellest refinements of torture before suffering the inevitable final death by the obsidian knife of the priests.

To come to more agreeable objects: several fine statues, forming one block with their pedestals: "Chac-mol," the tiger-king (thought by many to be the Mexican Bacchus) exceedingly fine in form, features, and pose; others nearly similar, the "indio triste" of black basalt; gigantic columns from Tula, the Toltec capital, colossal legs of atlantes, and monolithic columns decorated with carvings much in the style of those on Celtic crosses.

Three representations of Quetzalcoatl, God of air, in the form of colossal coiled serpents, exquisitely decorated with feathers and leaves of maïz.

One exceedingly beautiful colossal head of diorite, admirably decorated and superb in pose, is supposed to be "Totec," their grandest and most revered personification of the Sun.

Innumerable stone masks, with which it was customary for the priests to cover the faces of the idols during a king's illness. Many sculptured priestesses, their heads exceedingly fine, with elaborate headdresses and exquisitely plaited hair, much in the style of the curious and beautiful archaic statues in the Athenian Acropolis. Giant serpents' heads abound, said to have formed part of

the ancient “snake-wall” which surrounded the primitive Teocalli.

The “Goddess of Water” forms one side of a huge monolithic column of trachyte, called the “Fainting-stone,” said to be possessed of the strange power of causing anyone sitting or reclining on it, to instantaneously faint! The “Goddess of Music” is carved on jade of the most exquisite deep green colour, and presides over innumerable instruments of music, including clay whistles, each sounding one note of a different pitch, and each reproducing the exact note of some bird. Flutes of baked clay, bells, conch-shells, by which the priests sounded the hours, and variously shaped drums, one huge one of which, called Huehuatl, is the renowned war-drum of the great Teocalli—the deep and dismal, far-reaching tones of which struck such awe into the hearts of the Spaniards on the terrible “noche triste.”

Numerous bas-reliefs show the favourite Aztec game of ball, which was played with such ardour that, in the excitement of the contest, the players—who were allowed to receive and throw the ball only with the elbow, shoulder, and hip—frequently staked their wives and slaves on the result.

Huge stone disks for the game had a small hole in the centre, through which, if any player was so skilful as to propel the ball, he won, not only the game, but also all the clothes of all the spectators!

The funeral candelabra and cinerary urns are very finely formed and ornamented, as also is the immense collection from all parts of the Republic of pottery and vases, painted in brilliant colours, still perfectly fresh, the graceful Greek key-pattern being very frequent.

Innumerable small heads and figures, some of them

lovely, and almost worthy of Tanagra, exquisitely carved in jade, onyx, and other precious materials, as well as terra cotta.

Many idols, objects, and small heads are of distinctly Chinese and Tartar type, especially those from Yucatan, one of which represents a Buddhist trinity, and another an Indian temple.

The "Nahuatl," or Mexican language, spoken by the seven tribes of the Aztec nation which successively migrated into the land of Anahuac, is almost identical with that of the Esquimaux; but the dialects of their predecessors, the prehistoric races, of which the most remarkable were the Toltecas, Almicas, Xicalancas, Mayas, and Othomis, point to an Asiatic origin, especially the latter, which is mono-syllabic, and contains innumerable words absolutely identical in form and meaning with the Chinese.

The monuments also of some of these races, as well as their manners and customs, present an extraordinary resemblance and affinity to those of China, India, and Assyria, and also of Egypt.

At the present day many faces of the Mongolian type are to be met with in all parts of Mexico among the "Indios."

The Aztecs were remarkable for their wonderful skill in gold and silver ornaments, and jewellery, and in cutting and polishing the innumerable turquoises, sapphires, opals, emeralds, and other precious stones abounding in their hills. Two of the early historians of the Conquest, Clavigero and Torquemada, assert that they were able to mould a fish with half the scales gold and half silver, and single pieces half gold and half silver—arts long lost.

They wore gold and silver earrings, nose-rings, necklaces

and bracelets, armlets and anklets, while the nobles were entitled to lip-rings in addition.

Commercial transactions were mostly paid in kind, but tribute was also paid by means of little bells and hatchets of copper, and a kind of money was used in some parts.

“Zapotec” money, from Oaxaca, was made of thin sheets of copper, in the shape of a miniature meat-chopper, and thin copper anchors and coins shaped like a T were used in other provinces.

One very interesting object is the shield of Moctezuma II., which, after his tragic death, was presented by Cortés to the Emperor Charles V., who placed it in his palace at Vienna, where it remained till 1863, when the Emperor Franz Josef of Austria, gave it to his brother Maximilian, by whom it was brought back to its ancient home in Mexico.

Several strange “yokes” of polished stone or diorite of huge size and weight, are termed by some antiquarians “yokes of sacrifice,” which they opine to have been used by the priests for asphyxiating, and so minimizing the agony of the victims stretched on the stone of sacrifice. But I think they must be mistaken, for the Indian paintings represent merely a kind of very thick rope held in one hand tightly round the neck by a priest, which would have been impossible in the case of these heavy and bulky stone “yokes.”

The most remarkable of all the monuments after the “calendar stone” is the famous “Palemke cross,” brought from the wonderful “city of the priests” of that name, the “sacred city” of the Quiche empire, of which the emperor was always a priest.

This wonderful city of the dead (built in the fifth century A.D.) lies in the midst of great tangled masses of

giant flower-garlanded trees in the heart of the tropical forests of Yucatan. Its ruins are of gigantic proportions; huge terraces of cut stone, and grand solid stone and marble edifices which, unlike Aztec one-storied houses, reached the height of three; the whole of the colossal walls ornamented with bas-reliefs of massive figures, hieroglyphs and tracery of great beauty and refinement.

At the period of the Conquest this ruined city stood in the forest in the same state as to-day.

Three great sculptured marble slabs, each 6 feet 4 inches in height, 4 feet wide and 6 inches thick, forming one tableau, stood above the altar of the "Temple of the Cross."

One has been left there, one has been removed to the Smithsonian Institute at Washington, and the third is the one in this Museo. Its marble is of the finest grain, and of a lovely pale gold colour, somewhat resembling that of the sun-dyed Parthenon.

In nearly the centre of it is sculptured an elaborate and most beautiful cross of Latin form, on the right side of which (as seen by the spectator) a priest stands erect, nearly life size, offering an infant to the cross, his lips open in prayer.

Above the cross is the Quetzal (green-feathered bird), representing the God of air symbolized by the planet Venus as "star of the morning," a skull beneath being supposed to represent the same planet as "star of the evening," and various astronomical signs and hieroglyphics to which the key has not yet been found, above and on each side of the cross.

A plaster cast of the whole monument—of which this slab is only a third part—stands near, and displays a human figure, on the opposite side of the cross, symbolizing

the sun. The features and headdress of both figures are strikingly Assyrian, and the style of the whole, although superior in refinement of execution, recalls the bas-reliefs of Nineveh discovered by Layard.

The Museo contains many other prehistoric representations of crosses, some remarkably beautiful, and one the arms of which terminate in snakes' heads.

When the Spaniards found so universally established, the sign and worship of the "cross," they imagined that some Christian missionary must, at some period, have penetrated these regions, and many of the early historians thought themselves justified in identifying with the Apostle St. Thomas, the legendary Quetzalcoatl, the venerable white-skinned, bearded man, whose mysterious arrival and beneficent stay in the land, and shadowy passing away, with the promise of a future return, had remained so strongly impressed on the national faith, and had helped so materially in the Conquest.

But all over the world, in the dim shades of remotest antiquity, the symbol of the "cross" or geometrical sign of "right angles," had been known and worshipped.

And all the world over, the mysterious "sign" has for ever shone, for all peoples, in the sky—the brilliant glory of the "Southern Cross" in one hemisphere, and the scarcely less beautiful "Cross in the Swan" in the other.

May not these radiant starry crosses have been the original cause of the universal adoption of the symbol, or "sign?"

The Indian paintings, or "maps," as they are called, form an important, and deeply interesting, item of the Museo.

The Aztecs had no alphabet, and their historical records

and writings on every subject were painted in hieroglyphics, inferior to those of Egypt, inasmuch that they were ideograph and not phonetic, except in an infinitesimally small degree, in very rare instances, where symbols are thought to have been used as representations of sound.

On the other hand, Egyptian hieroglyphics are far from being all, or even in a majority, phonetic. Champollion allows a very small proportion.

The art of picture-writing was taught by the priests in colleges, and was so intricate and difficult to decipher, that the guild of painters, necessary for the interpretation of documents, was treated with higher consideration than almost any other.

The material for paintings was prepared from the fibres of the agave, and cotton-cloth and tanned skins were also used. The colours employed were few but vivid, and almost indelible.

In addition to pictures, they used conventional signs having little or no resemblance to the idea expressed. These writings were not intended for works of art, but merely as means of record and communication.

The city of Mexico was represented by a nopal-cactus growing from a rock, and recalled the legend of the first coming of the wanderers, led by their chief, the high priest Tenoch, when they saw, on the shore of the Lake Texcoco, poised upon a nopal growing out of a rock, an eagle from whose talons hung suspended a snake.

Chapoltepec was designated by a "grasshopper on a hill."

A curious and beautiful collection of drawings and paintings has been preserved in Tlaxcala, copies of which, and some originals, are to be seen in the Museo, con-

temporaneous with the Conquest, every important episode of which is admirably portrayed, by Tlaxcalan artists, accompanied by hieroglyphical descriptions. The later conquest of Guatemala by Pedro de Alvarado (the "Tonatiuh") and the expeditions of Nuño de Gusman into Jalisco and Sinaloa, are also carefully chronicled.

Some of these paintings recall Japanese art. One long strip of paintings on maguey gives the entire chronology of the Kings of Mexico and Texcoco. There are numerous others of the greatest interest, including an Indian map of the ancient Tenochtitlan.

A curious painting represents an order of nobles called "Eagles," specially dedicated to the sun, who held festivals of their own, at which they danced, dressed as eagles, and sent a yearly "messenger to the sun," selected for his beauty one year before, during which he was treated with divine honours, and entertained with feasts, music and luxury of every kind, till the fatal day on which he was conducted in triumphal procession to the summit of the great Teocalli, where, after delivering the "message of greeting" sent by the "Eagles" to the sun, he was seized by the priests and sacrificed with the usual ceremony, often preceded by some hours of exquisite torture.

His flesh was subsequently eaten, and his skin made into garments for the priests.

Many of the ordinary victims were also utilized in this way.

A few of the Aztec manuscripts are treasured in various European public libraries. One of the most important—as far as throwing light on the ancient Mexican customs—suddenly turned up, with several other specimens of picture-writing, in the Bodleian Library, after a mysterious disappearance of more than a century, and is known as the

“Mendoza Codex,” the original (of which it is a copy) having been primarily sent from Mexico to Charles V. by the first Viceroy, Don Antonio de Mendoza, Conde de Tendilla (1535).

A very beautiful and brilliantly-coloured “map” is in Rome, known as the “Borgian,” but by far the most interesting of all is the “Dresden Codex,” infinitely superior to all the extant rest in delicacy and refinement of execution, many of the hieroglyphical symbols of which are thought to be phonetic rather than ideographic. The material is a fine preparation of the agave, and nothing is known of its history except that it was bought at Vienna in 1739, for the Dresden Library.

From its vast superiority, many archæologists believe it to be a relic of the earlier and far higher Toltec civilization, many MSS. of which are known to have been preserved at Texcoco, where the national archives were also stored; and whence the Archbishop Zumarraga, the destroyer of so many Aztec memorials, caused them to be brought, and with those found in Mexico city, to be piled on to a huge “mountainous” (as it was described) bonfire in the market place, consisting entirely of MSS., and there reduced to a cinder!

The Aztecs possessed academies, in which the arts and sciences were taught, and also a literature, which, however, was less cultivated by them than by the Acolhuans branch of the Aztec nation, established in the city of Texcoco, built on the eastern side of the Lake Texcoco, opposite Tenochtitlan; and which was raised to the highest point of glory and prosperity by the great Netzahualcoyotl, who not only greatly enlarged his dominions and beautified his city with magnificent teocallis and palaces, gardens and monuments, but was also devoted to science,

philosophy, and literature, and was himself an admirable poet.

Some of his poems, which had, happily, escaped the flames to which Aztec records of all kinds were, as soon as found, consigned in the early days of the Conquest, were preserved and translated into Spanish by the royal Aztec historian Ixtlilxochitl, and are full of melody and melancholy philosophizings and musings.

A strange resemblance of some of his poems to those of his unknown contemporary in the Old World, the unhappy French poet, Villon, has been often remarked, especially to the one in which the latter evokes the memory of the illustrious dead, with the constant refrain, “*Mais où est le preux Charlemagne?*” ending with that oft-quoted line so full of melancholy grace and indefinable charm, “*Mais où sont les neiges d’Autan?*”

In the same vein, the king of Texcoco, in one of the verses of a long poem :

“If I should question where is the might of the once mighty Achalchicilitlamextzin, early leader of shadowy Toltecs? or where the strength of Necuxecmexmitl, strongest of men and pious worshipper of the eternal gods? . . .

“If I should ask you where, the once incomparable beauty of the divinely-glorious empress, Xinuhtzatl? . . .

“All for evermore have passed and vanished, like the fugitive mist on the high white cone of the Hill-that-smokes, that one moment floats in the golden sun-haze, and the next drifts far away out of thought or human ken, into blue fathomless depths of air. . . .

“All things of earth soon cease to be, like flowering blossoms only gathered to be tossed away, their radiance faded, their fragrance wasted, to be seen and known of the world no more—dust unto dust for evermore!”

It must be admitted that Aztec names are not easy to incorporate into poetry!

This enlightened poet-king was possessed of too much wisdom to retain faith in his country's idols, and from an early period of his reign abolished the hideous rites of human sacrifice and feasts. His early youth had been spent in perils and vicissitudes of all kinds, the throne having been usurped during his childhood; but the bulk of his people had remained faithful, and no reward or torture had been able to induce his betrayal. After re-conquering his throne, he lived renowned and respected, only one stain resting on his fame.

It was customary for the kings of Texcoco to have only one "lawful wife," a royal princess, whose eldest son succeeded to the throne. For many years, in consequence of an early disappointment, Netzahualcoyotl had remained unmarried. After he had reached middle age, he was magnificently entertained, during a royal progress, by a great cacique, who, to add to the honours of his reception, took the unusual step of causing the Mexican nectar at the banquets to be served to the king by his betrothed, a beautiful maiden of the royal house of Mexico, whose grace and charm so fascinated the guest, that, to secure her loveliness for himself, he ordered the cacique to take command of a difficult expedition, giving at the same time secret orders that he should be encouraged to place himself where death should be inevitable, explaining that his extinction was necessary in punishment of secret treason, but that, in consideration of past services, public arraignment and disgrace were to be avoided.

The unfortunate cacique, who is said to have guessed the real motive of the king, obeyed, and naturally never returned, and the lovely princess was free to marry his

rival ; but such was the regard of this new David for appearances and due decorum, that he contented himself with sending messages of the deepest condolence to the fair Hebe, and allowed a short period of mourning to elapse before inviting her to a grand festival, at which he even pretended to be beholding her for the first time, and to be suddenly entranced by her beauty !

The wedding was soon afterwards celebrated with magnificent pomp and rejoicings, the religious ceremonies being enacted with sacrifices of only fragrant incense, fruits, and flowers, and all went merrily, although the king is said to have written several poems full of remorseful regret for the means by which he had attained to happiness. The native historians, in recording the story, unite in severely blaming the king ; but admit that it was the one and only shadow on an otherwise blameless and glorious life.

The king so far extended his conquests and influence, and lived in such magnificence, that he came to be recognized as the head of the triple alliance of Texcoco, Mexico, and Tlacopan, and assumed the title of emperor.

For many years the beautiful empress gave him no children, which the priests incessantly assured him was the punishment for having abolished the worship of the gods and human sacrifices ; till at last he unfortunately yielded, and a hecatomb of human victims disgraced his greater enlightenment. The desired event not resulting, however, once more, and for ever, he ordained the final abolition of idols and human sacrifices ; and in honour of the "unknown God" fasted and prayed for forty days, after which it was intimated to him in vision that his petition was granted ; in thanksgiving for which he built a magnificent pyramidal temple, surmounted by a tower of nine stories, which he dedicated to the " Unknown and invisible God—

the Cause of causes"—of whom he allowed no image, and to whom he commanded that no sacrifice, save flowers and incense, should be in future ever offered.

Many charming stories are told of his benevolence and charity to the poor, and just and merciful yet strict rule, and of his wonderful poems, and skill in astronomy, and the poetic loveliness of his gardens, and the magnificent buildings with which he embellished the city. And after a glorious reign of forty-two years, he peacefully died, surrounded by his family and nobles, at the age of seventy-two; after having placed the royal robes upon his little son, Netzahuitpilli, aged eight years, the only child of the beautiful empress, who already gave promise of the great qualities which afterwards made him, in many respects, a worthy successor to his illustrious father.

CHAPTER XVII.

Academy of San Carlos—Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz—Tula—Querétaro—Guadalajara.

TO return to the Museo—it would be impossible to enumerate all its abounding interest, or the numerous records in stone of landmarks in the shadowy history of the ancient dwellers in Anahuac, who, like the wandering Hyksos of Egypt, left in their wake huge pyramids; and the more modern traditions of Aztec tribes. Time pressed, and the Museo closed, and we proceeded to pay a final visit to the Academy of San Carlos.

Amongst the Mexican portraits there, one notices a very beautiful one of a very extraordinary and interesting woman, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz.

She was born, in 1651, of noble Spanish and Mexican parentage, and from her earliest childhood exhibited a passionate love of learning. At the age of three she had surreptitiously learnt to read and write, and at eight had written her first poem; at nine she had mastered five instruments of music, and Latin and Greek; and at fifteen had ripened into such a prodigy of knowledge, and beauty, and science, that the fame of it rang through all Mexico, reaching the vice-regal throne, then occupied by the Marqués de Mancera, who, wishing to attach so brilliant a star to his court, appointed her lady-in-waiting to his wife.

Here the learned and beautiful damsel remained for two

years, the idol of the court, and the inseparable friend of the vice-queen.

She received many brilliant offers of marriage, but, wishing to devote her whole life to the pursuit of science and knowledge, and imagining that in the cloister alone she would find leisure and quiet—at the age of seventeen, in the flower of her beauty—joined the order of Carmelites, which, however, she found too severe, and soon left for the convent of San Jerónimo, where she took the vows and remained till the end of her life.

Here, although strictly joining in all the church offices, she seems to have been allowed ample leisure for studies and compositions, writing innumerable poems, which were published in the outer world, under the name of “The Tenth Muse—the Nun of Mexico,” and read with avidity and admiration by the friends she had quitted, and which are still much admired, in spite of not having altogether escaped the “gongorismo” and “culteranismo” by which Spanish literature during the last third of the seventeenth century was debased; cultivating her musical talents; studying philosophy, theology, metaphysics, mathematics, and astronomy—even entering into religious controversies with bishops and priests, undeterred by fear of the Inquisition.

She was loaded by her friends with gifts of musical and scientific instruments, and books to the amount of more than 4,000 volumes; becoming more and more famous, no stranger of distinction ever passing through Mexico without paying his homage to the Monastic “Tenth Muse,” and wondering at the extraordinary brilliancy of her genius and learning.

In her fortieth year, however, admonished by the Bishop of Puebla, she, after some remonstrance, renounced her

life of science, and, having caused all her books and instruments of music to be sold for the benefit of the poor, devoted herself entirely to the ordinary duties of a nun.

This, for her, martyrdom of intellectual inaction did not long endure ; for a fever having broken out in the convent cut short her life at the age of forty-two, the last days of which she had devoted to nursing her stricken sisters.

Many other interesting personalities adorn the history of Mexican literature, most of whose poems and prose are devoted to the description of the beauties of their exquisite scenery, and the romantic incidents of their history.

After the San Carlos had closed, and a hurried *déjeuner* at the "Concordia," we flew by tram to Tacubaya, a charming suburb, famous in the history of the Conquest, now full of fine villas surrounded by lovely gardens and magnificent trees; finally to Chapultepec, for one more afternoon in the lovely terraced garden of the castle, where the officers of the guard again amiably gave me leave to finish my previous sketch of the glorious view—so incomparably the finest of the "Hill that smokes," and the beautiful shining, mist-wreathed "White woman," looking at which those musical lines of Shelley's,

"Arethusa arose
From her couch of snows," *et seq.*,

seem to run in one's head—till sunset, when, alas ! with a regretful farewell to this heavenliest of views, heavenlier than ever in the rose tints of evening—I descended the "Hill of the Grasshopper," by the long, winding road, the great moss-laden cypresses solemnly looming like veiled spectres in the shades of parting day, and returned to the city by the beautiful Paseo de la Reforma ; at the further end of which, that grand monument, shaped after the ancient



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teocallis, stands with such imposing effect, crowned by the stately and energetic figure of the great CuahTEMOC.

Next morning (November 26th) we regretfully left Mexico city, and started early by the Central Mexican to Tula, the ancient Toltec capital, in which are many traces and remains of teocallis and palaces, but from which the principal monoliths and monuments have been transferred to the Museo Nacional. It is a picturesquely-situated little ciudad with grand views and lovely vegetation. At 4 p.m. we reached Querétaro, which has a very fine appearance from the estacion—its many towers and domed churches surrounded by fortified walls, rocky crags, and groves of beautiful trees; beyond which a fertile and well-cultivated plain stretches away to the distant horizon, bounded by graceful ranges of blue hills.

Here we alighted, and at once engaged a guide to take us through flowery meadows, fringed with lovely pepper trees, to a breezy moorland two miles outside the city walls, the “cerro de las campanas”—where, on an eminence facing the city, and the wide plain with its distant boundary of blue mountains—three monoliths, standing upright within a foot of each other, mark the spot where, at early dawn of a lovely sunshiny summer morning—June 19th, 1867, by decree of the Indian Juarez, the unfortunate Emperor Maximilian and his two faithful generals, Miramon and Mejia, took their stand—facing the sunrise, and their captor, General Escobedo: his victorious troops, and the neighbouring populace, gathered round to witness the volley, twice repeated, before the emperor fell dead.

It is a sad and melancholy spot, but beautiful exceedingly, as we saw it in the gleaming radiance of the nearly setting sun.

Our guide had been present on that sad summer morn-

ing, and described how the army had marched with music and great pomp to the place of execution, followed by the entire population of the city, the emperor being conveyed in a cab from the Convent of the Capuchins, accompanied by his chaplain and another priest, Canonigo Rodriguez, still living at the Collegio of Querétaro.

We walked back to the city, and visited the Governor's house where the trial took place, and saw many relics of the ill-fated emperor—among them the coffin, much stained, in which his remains were placed after death to be conveyed back to the city.

How many times, and how tragically, the House of Hapsburg has testified, in the person of its noblest members to the vanity of human grandeur !

Then to the Convent of the Capuchins in the near neighbourhood, now used as a private house, the occupiers of which most kindly received us, in the room in which the imprisoned emperor spent his last days in the interval between his condemnation and execution—submitting to his hard fate with the utmost dignity, and courage, and resignation.

This, the only room assigned to the imperial captive, for every purpose, is a nice-sized, cheerful apartment, with a high and wide window reaching to the floor, opening on to a small balcony, now filled with flowers. But this cheerful window was then mostly covered with great bars obstructing both light and air, and he was never for a moment left without a guard.

After a long and most interesting conversation with our hospitable host and hostess, reviving these sad memories, we sallied forth—it being now dark—no great distance, through the unevenly paved streets to the hotel of the Central Mexican Railway, a large and rambling building

with huge covered gateway and open patio, which probably had once been a monastery.

It was getting late, so we at once had supper at the very indifferent restaurant attached, and after reading till the lights were put out, were conducted by the proprietor, a very polite old Spaniard, to our rooms on the ground floor.

Mine was a huge apartment, probably the ancient chapter-room, with enormous windows down to the floor, opening on to the street, which it would have been pleasant to keep open but for the fear of thieves or passing cats and dogs. So I was left shut up in this hot and ghostly prison-like chamber, and as we were to leave at 4 a.m., sat up writing and reading as well as one tallow candle allowed.

Suddenly, in the silence, there was a frightful noise, something violently rattling and rushing across the room. I thought it must be an army of rats, and flew into the patio to hammer and bang with my umbrella at G.'s room for help; he came, and the host also flew to the rescue, stoutly protesting against the possibility of rats, but admitting that of scorpions, which, he said, always made that kind of flapping, rattling noise with their tails, and there were plenty about.

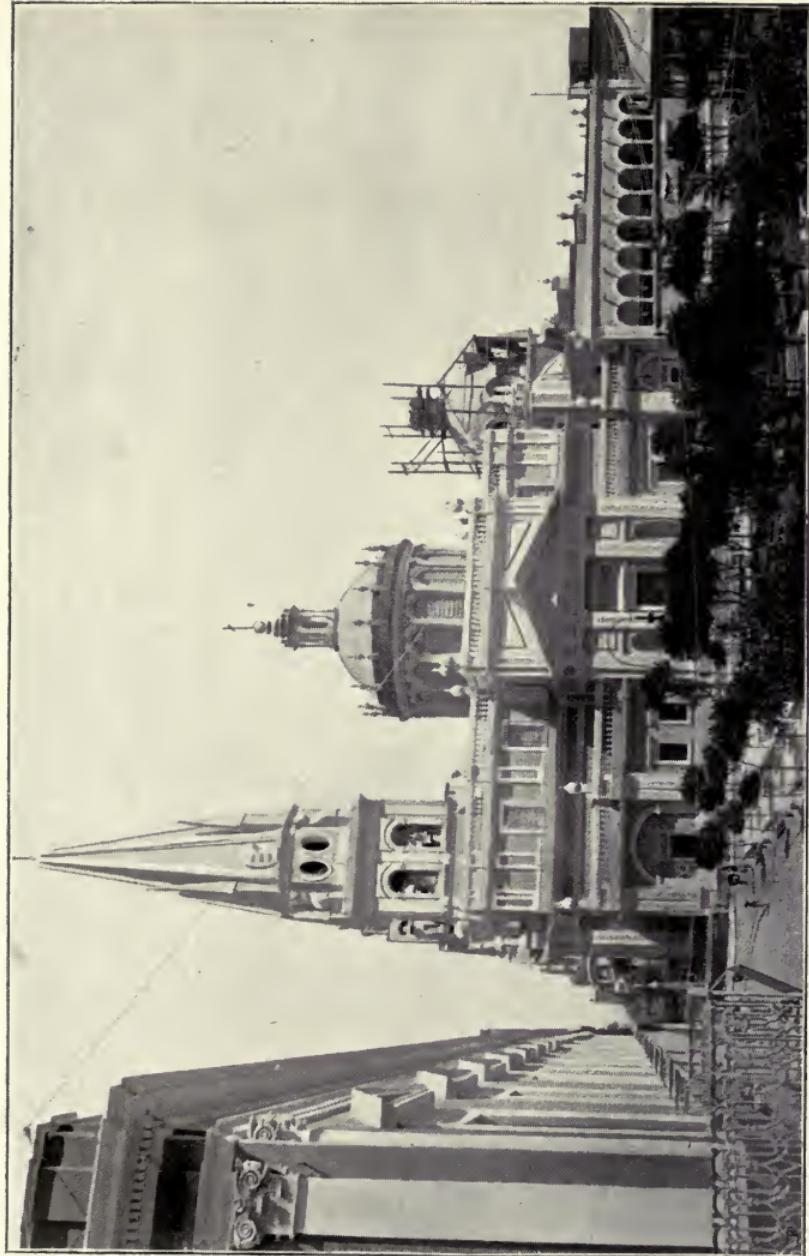
This being by no means reassuring, I insisted on a search being made, but nothing was found except huge holes in the floor, which we covered over with basins and boxes, and I was given an extra candle and left "sitting alone with Fear!"

A disagreeable companion, and great was my joy when 4 o'clock struck, and a cab, which we had ordered over night, called to take us in the pitch dark, bumping along the boulder-paved streets, to the estacion of the Central Mexican, *en route* for Guadalajara, and soon we had left

this melancholy city, fraught with such tragic memories of capitulation and death. We were told here, and indeed, heard it spoken of as an undoubted fact all over Mexico, that the lamentable illness of the Empress Charlotte, after her return to Europe in 1867, had been caused by poison.

There exists in Mexico, as well as in some other parts of the world, a certain shrub inexpedient to name, the root of which, ground into a fine soluble powder, can be easily mixed with food and drink, and is almost impossible of detection. For the first few days it seems to work insidiously, without visible or outward sign except a certain restless, nervous agitation, followed before long, however, by a vague *malaise* and inability to sleep, combined with feverish and morbid anxiety of mind, culminating, after a while, in constant worrying suspicion of poison and fear of assassination. The memory fails, all kinds of illusions and delusions arise, the brain becomes more and more darkly clouded, till the intellect gives way and a state of complete insanity results, in which the unhappy victim may live a vegetating life for an indefinitely longer or shorter period, but for ever hopelessly and irretrievably alienated in mind.

After the withdrawal from Mexico of the French troops, through the influence of the United States some months before the final catastrophe, the Empress Charlotte, a beautiful woman of extraordinary energy and resourceful courage, had volunteered to undertake a mission to Europe in the hope of obtaining help in money and troops, and especially to remonstrate with Napoleon III. on his desertion of her husband's cause, trusting to bring about a change in his policy ; and it is affirmed—whether truly or not—that fearing the possible success of her appeals, an



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Indian woman who had access to the kitchen of the imperial household, was commissioned, by certain of the Republican leaders, to mix in coffee prepared for the Empress, poison ground from this deadly root, a few hours before she sailed—in apparently perfect health and reviving hope, not doubting the success of her mission.

The sad sequel is but too well known; the heart-breaking chill and disrespect of her reception at Paris, her futile efforts elsewhere, and the gradual then swift and utter over-clouding of her brilliant mind, saving her at least the pain of the tragedy of Querétaro.

We moved rapidly along in the dawn and lovely sunrise till we arrived, at 9.30, at Irapuato, where the train stopped half an hour for an excellent breakfast with delicious strawberries (which are here served fresh all the year round) at the railway restaurant. At these meals one generally has for *vis-à-vis* one's railway "conductor," or the engine-driver—a decided advantage, as they generally take their time and save one the trouble and anxiety of constant rushes to see that the train is not off directly the ding-dong begins to clang.

We resumed our journey by a branch line, entering the exquisitely fertile province of Jalisco, through the lovely emerald-green valley watered by the broad Rio de Lerma, the longest and most important in Mexico, receiving innumerable tributaries during its progress, from its rise in the mountains near Toluca, through Lake Chapala, to the Pacific near San Blas, nowhere navigable, being full of cataracts and rapids.

We proceed through gently undulating ground, the great mountains left behind, but to right and left, far away delicately-blue graceful hills; 161 miles, scheduled

to be accomplished in eight hours, but something or other happened to the engine and we were two hours late in arriving (at 5.30) at the bright and charming and exquisitely fresh and clean City of Guadalajara, the Mexican Florence, and capital of the state of Jalisco.

The conquest of this beautiful province was effected by the infamous Nuño de Gusman, president of the first "Audiencia"—a kind of small senate by which Mexico was ruled—to the exclusion of the Conquistadores (1528-1531), and during the existence of which, his rapacity and barbarous cruelties, including the causeless burning of the King Caltszonzin in Michioau, became so notorious that, after suspending him by the second "Audiencia," the Emperor Charles V. decided to place the government for the future in the hands of viceroys, the first of whom, Don Antonio de Mendoza, Conde de Tendilla, governed from 1535 to 1550 with the utmost rectitude and wisdom; redressing the grievances of the natives, establishing colleges and hospitals, developing the vast mineral treasures of the mountains, and, amongst other benefits, establishing a printing-press in Mexico city, the first in the New World. During his reign, the great "Protector of the Indians," Fray Bartholomé de Las Casas, arrived from Spain, and devoted his zealous energies to fearlessly shielding the Mexicans from the cruelty of their conquerors and redressing their wrongs.

Of the sixty-one Spanish viceroys, from 1550 to 1821, many highly distinguished themselves by the great ability and justice with which they governed, protecting the ill-treated Indians, developing the rich mineral and agricultural resources of the country; building magnificent cathedrals and churches, hospitals and convents, establishing colleges and factories, executing great and useful

public works such as roads, canals, and aqueducts; and generally extending the commerce and prosperity of this charming and beautiful country, which, in its actual prosperous Republican form, certainly has no reason to be ungrateful for the everywhere-to-be-seen benefits of the Spanish period of rule.

On arriving at Guadalajara, a corruption of the more musical Arabic "Wadil-ad-jara" (Stony River), we walked at once to the lovely "plaza de Armas," in which a military band was playing; one side of it filled by the cathedral, the grand exterior of which, with its lofty and massive towers and great central golden-tiled dome and many picturesquely irregular smaller ones, is most original and beautiful.

It was too late to see the interior, which was closed, so we walked round examining the beautiful exterior; then round the plaza with its many fountains and brilliant flower beds and rows of orange, lemon, and citron trees, and grand palms and exotic shrubs, listening to the charming music and watching the promenading citizens, poor and rich, in their gay and picturesque attire—the air balmy and warm, redolent of delicious perfume.

We looked into several rich and brilliantly-lighted shops at the further end of the plaza, passing, on its opposite side, the huge and handsome block of buildings constituting the palacio del Gobierno, to our hotel, just round the corner, the "Gran Humboldt," most comfortable, airy, and clean; all the bedrooms on the first floor opening on to a charming wide cloister-like brick terrace full of flowers and plants in tubs.

It is entirely open on the four inner sides overlooking the central patio, which is of course open to the sky, and in which a fountain of many jets sprinkles and refreshes

great orange and palm trees; roses and jasmine and flowering creepers twining round and up the supports and balustrades of the brick terrace, which is covered with little round tables gaily decked with flowers, where one takes one's meals *al fresco*.

Next morning (November 28th) we breakfasted at six, and then hastened to the cathedral, the erection of which was begun in 1561, and, like that of Puebla, occupied a century. The interior, although not comparable to that of Puebla, is exceedingly beautiful, of great height and expanse, lovely and graceful lines; the decoration entirely white and gold resplendently fresh and clean, but, perhaps, almost too glaringly light, and a little wanting in the mystery and solemnity produced by shadow: more one's idea of a hall of justice (the original purpose of the "basilica") than of a church. It consists of an apse and high, lofty dome and three naves, 256 feet long, and 108 high, the central of which was originally occupied—as customary in Spanish churches—by the coro; but in 1827 the architect Gutierrez, by permission of the chapter, removed it from the nave and placed it at the back of the high altar, which stands under the great central dome, thus leaving the whole nave free, and the entire perspective open to view. An imposing and majestic effect is produced by thirty massive columns, of which sixteen are especially grand, each composed of four huge Doric pillars grouped into one, but their capitals overhung with beautifully sculptured palm branches and leaves, giving the impression of a grove of petrified palm trees.

Most unfortunately these grand and beautiful columns of fine-grained stone have been painted to imitate marble. At the upper end of the nave are two fine stained glass windows from Paris. It seems a pity that their own excel-

lent artists should be so little employed by the Mexicans. The high altar stands on a vast platform reached by a wide flight of steps and balustrades of white marble, handsomely decorated with gilt bronze ornaments from Milan. The massive tabernacle, also of white marble, with finely-wrought doors of gilt bronze surmounted by an elaborately carved and gilt baldechino. At the four corners stand magnificent statues of the four Evangelists in white Carrara marble of Genoese workmanship, behind which the coro stretches as far as the east end wall, its high panelling and stalls exquisitely carved and inlaid with precious woods and ivory, superb examples of Spanish-Flemish art, recalling, and almost rivalling, the wonderful wood-carving and inlaying in the coros of the glorious cathedrals of Burgos and Toledo, the work of the famous Felipe Vigarni (de Borgoña). Above are four richly-coloured windows, and the great dome is harmoniously painted and gilt. The two outer naves contain each five capillas gorgeously decorated, of which the "Lady-chapel" contains an admirable copy of the famous "Last Supper" by Titian, in the Escorial—an important portion of which was so barbarously cut off by order of Philip II., because too large for its destined position in the refectory of that palatial monastery—in spite of the tears and remonstrances of the court painter El Mudo, who had been a favourite pupil of Titian, and who implored in vain to be allowed to paint, unpaid, a copy of it, minus the superfluous portion, for the refectory, in six months, if only the grand original might be saved entire, and placed elsewhere.

In a tribune, above the great entrance, is placed a magnificent and exceedingly melodious organ, expressly manufactured in 1880 in Paris, at the cost of 60,000 dollars, the only one in Mexico that contains the entire

series of pedal keys, with a smaller one for the coro, both richly decorated in white and gold.

The "Treasure of treasures," however, and looked upon by the chapter of the cathedral, and all Guadalajara, as "the apple of their eye," is the exquisitely-beautiful "Assumption" by Murillo, treasured in the grand Sacristia, where the precious church-plate and superb old vestments are carefully kept.

It was taken from the Escorial, for which it was originally painted, and given to the cathedral of Guadalajara, by the King Carlos IV., in gratitude for large sums of money supplied to him by the chapter during the Napoleonic invasion of Spain; and was hidden away for ten years by the chapter during the French invasion of Mexico in 1860—the French general having offered to buy it for 40,000 dollars, a proposal rejected with indignant scorn by the worthy canons—who fearing, however, lest it should suffer a repetition of the fate of the beautiful (but not *so* beautiful) "Assumption" carried by force from Spain by Marshal Soult—from whose heirs it was bought by the trustees of the Louvre—determined to keep it in safe hiding till after the departure of the rapacious art-grabbers: when it was brought back in triumph and replaced in the Sacristia of the cathedral, where it now hangs, magnificently framed, high up to be well out of reach of possible injury, and carefully veiled when not required to be seen.

It is, indeed, a vision passing the beauty of earth! the softly tender and subtle colour, radiant yet subdued, the exquisite white robe, whiter than the driven snow, and floating mantle of deep heavenly blue; the delicate loveliness of the upturned radiant face, illumined in glory from above—a saint's and poet's dream, of unimagined grace and spotless lovely innocence, divinely beautiful! infant

angels floating in the golden clouds, laden with flowers of Paradise and palm-branches as they rise in the shining light—an ethereal, wondrous dream, such as only Murillo, in moments of ecstasy, has ever been able to depict.

We saw also here marvellous specimens of mediæval embroidered vestments, in the most perfect state of preservation as to colour and texture. We were here, as at Puebla, struck by the extraordinary care taken of everything, the scrupulous and radiant cleanliness, never a speck of dust to be seen, the candlesticks and ornaments all perfectly straight and symmetrically arranged—in short, everything in the most perfect order.

The view from the roof of the cathedral, and the roofing itself, is exquisite ; it takes many hours to walk all over it and admire its many brilliantly-tiled domes, its Lombardo-Gothic towers (three times thrown down by earthquakes and three times rebuilt) and turrets, and balustrades, and irregular roofing, forming the most artistic and picturesque assemblage and whole imaginable, with lovely points of view, and from which you look down on the beautifully laid-out city beneath, with its flowery plazas and fragrant groves and palm trees, and innumerable churches and hospitals and fine buildings, encircled by lovely green waves of meadowland fading away into distant graceful hills of the loveliest and most delicate turquoise-blue.

The magnificent Palacio del Gobierno, occupying one whole side of the beautiful Plaza de Armas, dates from the same period as the cathedral, and is notable for having been the scene of the first attempt to form an independent government by Hidalgo, the “patriot-priest,” in 1810, and whence he sallied forth, in January, 1811, at the head of 100,000 men in the hope of destroying the royalists under Calleja—by whom, however, he was defeated, and

forced to fly to Zacatécas, and thence retreating northward, was taken prisoner through the treachery of one of his chiefs, and, with several of his adherents, shot at Chihuahua the following July.

This palacio was also the scene of the imprisonment, in 1858, and condemnation to death of Don Benito Juarez, when he and several of his generals were being marched into the square to be shot, at the very moment of the opportune arrival of General Landa, which saved them from death, and enabled Juarez to finally establish the Republic, of which he became the first president in 1861, retaining that dignity till his death in 1872.

Guadalajara contains several exceedingly fine churches, among which San José is pre-eminent in magnificence of decoration and gilding. Its situation, too, is most charming, presiding, as it were, over the loveliest of plazas, many-fountained and gorgeous with flowers and fragrant groves.

San Francisco is another interesting and much decorated church, attended almost entirely by Indios, for whom the services are specially adapted. Its exterior is exceedingly grand and imposing, with two magnificent towers. Foremost among the public buildings is the Teatro degollado, said to be the finest and largest theatre in all Mexico.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Guadalajara—Juanacatlan—Barranca—Hospital de San Bélen
—Hospicio—San Pedro Tlaquepaque—Tampico—Eagle Pass.

In the early afternoon we went by train about half an hour's distance to El Castillo, where a little branch-line, for electric cars, runs to the famous falls of Juanacatlan, the Niagara of Mexico, formed by the great Rio de Lerma after it has received the waters of many tributaries, and has passed through and emerged from the great Lake Chapala.

An enormous flour-mill that looks half fortress, half monastery, stands on the left bank of the Rio just below the falls, and several terraces at different heights, well protected by brick balustrades, have been added for the convenience of sightseers, from which the falls can be seen at different angles and points of view.

The scene is one of the extremest beauty. First there is the intoxicating environment of tropical sunshine, gilding, warming, and illuminating. Above the falls the broad river calmly glides, dotted with little islands brilliantly verdant with sugar-canies and tobacco, through sweet and flowery meadow-land rising on one side into gently undulating hills veiled and shadowed in loveliest blue mist, till it reaches in its tranquil flow a rocky, absolutely perpendicular descent of 70 feet, over which its huge and mighty volume of greeny-yellowy sheeny water seems

to fall with perfectly calm *nonchalance* in one thick creamy, golden-brown sunlit mass, 600 feet wide.

Only as it touches the depths of the abyss does it seem to develop energy. It then gives forth a sound as of thunder, and great clouds of snowy spray rise in all directions, drenching the spectator, and, to more purpose, the great masses of rock on the further side, on which grows an indescribably lovely, soft, golden-green velvety moss, bathed in this perpetual warm vapour of water, of so dazzling a tint of emerald that no art can give the slightest idea of it, in addition to which it is every moment lighted and re-lighted by the evanescent but continually recurring iridescence of the most exquisite series of rainbows in the glowing afternoon sun.

I stayed in this enchanting spot the whole afternoon ; the other visitors returned to Guadalajara, and G. went for a walk up the river, whilst I remained sketching, as well as the drenching spray would allow, from the lowest terrace, quite at the foot of the falls, when suddenly down came a huge brick within an inch of me and my sketch, from the top wall of the mill. I jumped up, and just caught sight of a boy in the act of throwing another. So I flew up the steps to the upper terrace, to complain to the miller, whom I found lazily standing in his picturesque huge sombrero, talking to an Indian on a burro (donkey).

He listened most politely, and said of course it was only an accident, but he would go and look after the boy ; so I began another sketch from the upper terrace, thinking it as well to be out of the boy's reach. But whether it was pure mischief, as in Greece, and even many parts of Spain, where the boys invariably throw stones at you for fun, or whether he had designs on the señora estranjéra's purse, remains a mystery.

Anyhow, I saw no more of him, and went on painting till sunset, when G. returned, and the electric car arrived for its last trip that day, and we mounted into it, only just in time to escape a tremendous thunder-storm, which showed us how it can rain in the tropics. The thunder never ceased reverberating, but with an absence of the sudden, violent, startling claps to which we are accustomed in England ; the lightning incredibly vivid and brilliant, the forked and sheet flashes absolutely incessant. By time we had reached Castillo the rain had ceased, but the magnificent albeit terrific lightning continued far into the night.

Next morning (November 29th) we started at seven by tram for a long day in the country, and in about an hour arrived at a picturesque little village where we found burros and a guide waiting to take us to the famous Barranca. My burro was a pretty little animal, but the riding-gear the very acmé of discomfort. It consisted of a sort of hard pillion, with two crossed sticks in front to hold on by—an aggravation of Greek experience—and a rope round the neck of the burro wherewith to guide him, which one could only do by half throttling him. The guide was a picturesque native who spoke a little Spanish, but so mixed up with Mexican *patois* that we could only converse with difficulty.

We started in delicious sunshine, as usual, through lovely green meadows, on to soon wilder ground, dotted with many aromatic shrubs, and carpets of flowers, on to a moorland towards graceful blue hills, till we reached the head of the Barranca, when we began to descend steep and stony paths, winding into the loveliest ravine, down the centre of which a babbling brook danced in snowy cascades. As we descended, more and more tropical became the vegetation ; palms, bananas, orange and lemon

trees, plantains, sugar-canés, coffee and mango trees—in short, we found ourselves once more in delicious “tierra caliente.” The heat increased as we descended and the day advanced, but much of the path is shaded by exuberant vegetation and magnificent trees, and cooled by clear bubbling springs, which, before long, had fed the brook into a fussy little river, tumbling its crystal waters from rock to rock, till at last it sank to rest in a shining lake below—surrounded by plantations of the exquisite light-green sugar-cane, and the rich deep-green of coffee—its blue wavelets reflecting the lovely sky.

Here was a valley full of enchanting tropical trees and shrubs, and on one side a charming hacienda with a flowery garden, from which oranges, sweet-limes, mangoes, and delicious figs were produced for our delectation.

After reposing ourselves and burros for some time in the noontide heat under the delightful shade, and wandering among the magnificent trees and divine vegetation, we retraced our steps up the zig-zag path in the lengthening shadows of the late afternoon; suddenly, at one of the sharp turns, stumbling nearly on to the top of an enormous rattle-snake coiled up in a sunny corner of the path. We happened to be walking at the moment to rest the burros, and needless to say how, with one bound and shriek, we fled out of the way of the hideous reptile! The guide, leading the burros, gave himself up for lost, but got round the corner safely.

The sun had set before we reached the end of our delightful expedition at the village, where we were quite sorry to take leave of our good little sure-footed burros and the picturesque guide, and after being refreshed at the little “fonda” with a small half-glass of “méscal” (distilled like “pulqué” from the agave), which the inn-

keeper assured it was our duty to taste once at least, and which we found not at all bad—very strong, and exceedingly and agreeably reviving after the considerable fatigues of the day ; we re-entered the tram, and returned to the city, in time, after a hasty supper, to hear the band play, and rummage the bookshops in the lovely Plaza de las Armas.

We were assured that it was *de rigueur* to see the celebrated Guadalupe church, seven or eight miles distant ; so next morning the early dawn saw us seated, breakfastless, at 6 a.m., in an electric car, shivering with cold, till the sun had risen sufficiently to warm the atmosphere, when it became at once deliciously hot.

On arriving we found a broad expanse of enclosure covered with beautiful green turf, surrounded by massive iron and gilt railings and handsome gateways, the great church rising in the centre. It is imposing from its size, and has two lofty and handsome towers, and a fine yellow-tiled dome ; but the interior is disappointing, and only remarkable, as are all the churches in Mexico, for its extraordinary cleanliness, and the freshness of its gilding and decoration, and the extreme order in which everything is kept.

We returned by the same tram-car to the city, and after a welcome breakfast at the Gran Humboldt, hurried out to visit the magnificent Hospital de San Bélen, built in the latter half of the eighteenth century by the saintly and admirable Bishop of Guadalajara, Fray Antonio Alcalde, to whom so many of the great institutions of this city, both of charity and education are due, including the university and numerous colleges for all classes, the magnificent public library, and many churches, notably that of Guadalupe.

The hospital is gigantic in size, and stands most imposingly on elevated ground in one of the finest suburbs—a huge, as it were, castellated mass of towers and turrets and domes—eccentric, but picturesque.

Its dedication is inscribed over the great door of the chief entrance : “ Fray Antonio Alcalde á la humanidad doliente.”

The various departments radiate from an immense rotondo in the centre of the buildings, in every corner of which you come upon patios, of various sizes, all full of exquisite flowers and palms, orange, lemon, and citron trees and fountains, making delightful and healthful vistas for the sick dwellers.

The corridors leading to the various departments, the men occupying one side, and the women and children the other, are of lofty height and great breadth ; and the dormitories and sitting-rooms for the sick, containing accommodation for 800, are of equally large dimensions, with high and wide airy windows, everywhere letting in light and sunshine.

One large patio is devoted to the vegetables and medicinal herbs and plants required for this huge establishment, in which there is a chemical laboratory in which all the medicines are fabricated and compounded.

Also a spacious amphitheatre for surgical cases, and a numerous staff of physicians and surgeons.

Everything is radiant with cleanliness and order, and the poor sick people, with many of whom I conversed, seemed to highly appreciate the comforts of this admirable institution. The kitchen department, in which great numbers of cooks and scullions are employed, is of great size and convenience.

There is a church attached and an observatory above,

furnished with excellent telescopes and all the latest scientific instruments, from which a splendid view is to be had. At a further end quite apart, and entirely divided and separate from the sick people, is a department for lunatics, with a large sunny patio full of fruits and flowers and trees, in which they seemed to disport themselves quite happily, looked after, apparently, in their patio, where we saw them, by the saner among themselves; but, I presume, the keepers occasionally look in. The more dangerous lunatics are placed in a separate department, and are quite out of sight and hearing of the quiet monomaniacs and other harmless cases, with several of whom I spoke quite pleasantly.

It takes hours to see the whole, and we were most kindly taken over it all by one of the principal officials. It is impossible to imagine any better conducted or more orderly establishment; and the sunny and charming patios, with their fountains and flowers and sweet-scented groves, must be a great sanitary help, as well as source of cheerfulness to the patients.

After leaving the hospital we proceeded by tram to another gigantic building, exceedingly handsome architecturally, begun in 1803 by Gutierrez, and completed in 1840 by Manuel Gomez Ibarra, both distinguished Mexican architects, particularly the latter.

In this enormous hospicio, the cost of which was defrayed by Bishop de Cabañas, are sheltered, in various departments, all admirably arranged and kept in the most perfect order and cleanliness, orphans to the number of 1,000, incurables, foundlings, and disabled and aged poor.

Almost at the entrance is a lovely patio, full of exquisite trees and aromatic shrubs, fountains, and great beds of

brilliant flowers, on one side of which stands the church of the hospicio, of exquisite architecture, crowned by the most graceful of cupolas. The centre of the edifice is occupied by an ideal patio, full of the rarest and most exquisite flowers and trees, refreshed by the loveliest fountain. This is the largest and most beautiful of the twenty-three patios which intersect, with sunshine and delicious flowery shade and songs of birds, the various portions of this enormous building.

The interior of the church, lighted by its graceful dome, is exceedingly beautiful and radiant with decoration and gilding.

Some of the apartments are of gigantic dimensions. One is full of musical instruments, including a very fine grand pianoforte; another is furnished with globes and maps and scientific instruments, testifying to the advanced education given to these poor children; a third is set apart for drawing and painting, even photography is taught, and lithography, mathematics, French, and English, in addition to various useful arts and trades—a curriculum not to be surpassed by even a London School Board!

Daily lessons are also given in household work and economy, and in cookery in an immense kitchen furnished with all modern appliances, procured from the United States.

As one walks through the streets of this beautiful city, nothing is more striking than the love of flowers displayed by the dwellers. Every window and balcony is a garden, and you see, through the usually wide open door, the invariable “patio,” the centre of every house, however humble, which, whether little or big, proudly displays its glossy and carefully tended orange and lemon-tree, and palm and brilliant flowers. In the better class of houses

these trees and flowers stand in great vases or pots of the beautiful ware of San Pedro, with always a marble basin, from which rises a clear sparkling fountain.

There is a huge penitentiary or prison at one end of the city, which is said to be admirably conducted, but time failed to go over it.

At a distance of five miles is the little town of San Pedro Tlaquepaque, where the pottery and terra-cotta works, for which Guadalajara is famous, are carried on, the neighbourhood abounding in clays of the finest description.

Towards evening, with great regret, we left this charming and fascinating city for Irapuato, the "strawberry station," where we ate strawberries and changed trains; and travelling through the night, found ourselves at San Luis-Potosi in time to have a good breakfast at the station restaurant, before leaving by the 6.30 a.m. train to Tampico.

The beauty of the whole of this journey to Tampico is so indescribably glorious, that it seems to defy description, and is, at the same time, absolutely unique and entirely different from every other part of Mexico.

No stranger should omit this wonderful experience.

From San Luis-Potosi, which stands in a fertile valley 6,118 feet above the sea, surrounded by mountains teeming with richest mineral treasure, the line descends by natural terraces, over cañons and rushing streams, to the grand valley of San Ysidro—the mountain sides clothed with dense forest dazzlingly green. At Cardeñas, at noon, the train stops twenty minutes for the despatch of luncheon at the excellent railway restaurant, and then proceeds, abruptly descending into a lovely valley, from which it enters the magnificent cañon of Tamasopo, through which the train creepingly descends, at a foot's pace, along

a mere shelf in the side of the perpendicular mountain, overhanging—with, as it were, nothing between—a deep-down terrific precipice, in the depths of which may be discerned the silvery river bordered with richest tropic vegetation.

At the end of the cañon—reached after marvellous engineering round frightful curves in the rocky ledge, and through several short tunnels, you emerge into a valley so entrancingly beautiful that words fail to describe it !

It is surrounded by superb mountains—no snow rests on them, but the rich, dense, gloriously-green tropical vegetation covers them, altogether and absolutely, to their very summits. It is a miracle of green beauty ; the whole valley is equally, densely, emerald-green, except where a few clearances have been made for plantations of sugar-cane, pine-apples, or coffee shrubs—for here we are again in “tierra caliente”—and the track runs through one exquisite tangled mass of flowers and creeping, gorgeous orchids, beggaring description ; where the dainty humming-bird, with its tiny feathers of coloured fire, and flying insects of brilliant hues, dart in and out like rays of sunshine ! Here is to be seen, in absolute perfection, the bamboo. It grows to an immeasurable height, in glorious waving masses, of a delicacy and a grace and beauty of tender foliage simply indescribable ! Many are the varieties of grand palm and giant trees overhung with gorgeous flowers, but these infinitely and exquisitely graceful and superb bamboos are sights never to be forgotten.

Breathless with delight, on we speed, till the train again stops twenty minutes at Rascon for dinner, about midday ; after which we enter another cañon—Abra de Caballeros—through and down which we, happily, creep to El Salto del Abra, where the scene is perfectly divine.

The same densely-green, forest-crowned mountains surround us—one fairy-like, emerald-green mass of exquisite foliage, through which the crystal-green water of the Abra rushes, at El Salto falling and plunging in a series of cascades 300 feet high, in thick masses of radiantly white, as it were, flakes of snow! deep pools between each leap, indescribable effects of pure, transparent emerald and turquoise! Anything more transcendently and perfectly beautiful could not be dreamed.

Then comes the Boca del Abra (mouth of the mountain creek), where the river disappears in a tangled mass of gorgeous vegetation, to find its way into the broad plain, almost equally emerald, of which we now come into sight, stretching far away beyond the immense masses of vivid-green forest—from above which we overlook it—to a shining streak of sparkling silver in the far horizon, where lie the bright waters of the Gulf in which the Abra finds its rest.

A sublimely glorious sight! On we pass, through the primeval forest, till night, alas! comes on, and lambent mists, sucked up by the torrid sun and now let loose, spread in vapoury clouds, and rest, like ghostly shrouds, on the mighty trees, and the moon rises in silver glory.

Not till 9.30 do we reach Tampico, on the wide river Panuco, rising between river and lake, the sea seven miles distant, but the river so deep and broad that the ships sail up to its quays, and its ports and docks are crammed with steamboats and merchandise; and many lines of steamers make communication with New York, New Orleans, Cuba, and various ports in Europe.

Here we are again, as at Vera Cruz, in the lowest zone of “tierra caliente,” and the heat is great. A nice little comfortable clean inn, where, after wandering in the moon-

light, we spend the short remainder of the night, brilliant fireflies darting amid the densely-foliaged trees, and clouds of mosquitoes, which, however, we keep at bay with the afore-mentioned "anti-mosquito soap."

Up again at 4 a.m. to see what we can of the town, which contains some picturesque buildings and churches, and a very charming plaza shaded by huge and most lovely trees, and full of flowers and fountains.

We breakfasted at 5.30 at the little restaurant near our Fonda, where you only lodge, and then walked on the quay by the broad river Panuco, into which a tributary runs close by the town. The stone quays are very handsome, and many are the ships, and steamers, and pleasure-boats.

The broad lake gleams beyond, amidst gorgeous vegetation, and as we puffed away, some time after six, a glorious sunrise and cloudless sky reflected in the glassy waters of placid lake and river, we grieved at leaving so soon this dreamy alluring spot.

We now saw what it was too dark to more than guess at last night—the smiling plain through which we sped; before long rising again into primeval forest, teeming with giant trees of the most glorious beauty, the boundless sunny plain beneath, deeper and deeper into forest; trees upon trees, far as the eye can reach, a mine of gold in wood! Mountains clothed to their very tops, miles upon miles of interminable flower-clothed, endless groves of untold value! And the glorious bamboo groups, and matted flowery undergrowth, under which many a gruesome creature doubtless lurked. On, midst all these glories. Again, the glittering wonders of the beautiful Salto del Abra, where there are also cavernous grottoes of green limpid water covering strange growths and shapes, deep in the

mountain side, hidden by giant trees, and of course unseen from the train.

On, through the scenes which had so entranced us yesterday, which, seen the reverse way, appeared, if possible, even more magnificently grand and beautiful; the marvellous, dazzling verdure glistening like a fairyland.

After a day of utterest delight and joy in memory for ever, we found ourselves once more high up in the mountains in "tierra fria" long after sunset, at San Luis-Potosi, where an excellent dinner awaited us at the railway restaurant. On, in the semi-darkness of moonlight to Chicalote, where, at midnight, we changed trains and lines, going on immediately to Pacheca, where the train stopped for an early and very good breakfast. Then on again, through fine and fertile country between grand chains of Sierras; next, for a short space, through sandy, dusty lands, more or less arid, the vegetation consisting of yuccas and enormous cacti of startling shapes, very subject to gales and violent sandstorms and sand-spouts exactly resembling water-spouts; fine peaked mountains in the distance, till we reached Torreon at 2.30 p.m., where we left the Mexican Central, and after dining at the excellent railway restaurant, proceeded north-eastward by the Mexican International, and could have wept to think that we were, alas! speeding away out of lovely, romantic, fascinating Mexico!

Ay de mi! as the soft Spanish sighs.

The line gradually descended from the high Mexican tablelands and ran through admirably cultivated plains till darkness overshrouded the scene.

All night we sped along, early dawn revealing fertile, highly cultivated country, alternating with stretches covered with indigenous sub-tropical vegetation, with occa-

sional ranchos and herds of cattle and horses ; and crossing over the fine Rio Grande, which forms the boundary between the two Republics, by the usual kind of unprotected iron bridge, 310 yards long, we arrived at Eagle Pass, on its American bank, where we stopped at the customs for examination of baggage.

This satisfactorily over, we continued our journey into Texas, realizing by many signs that we were once more in Yankeeland !

On, through perfectly flat stretches of prairie and more or less cultivated plain, arriving at noon (December 4th) at San Antonio, where we spent the remainder of the day.



EL SALTO DEL ABRA. P. 223.

CHAPTER XIX.

San Antonio—Florida—Jacksonville—Pablo Beach—St. Augustine—Fort Marion.

THE Americans are very proud of the city of San Antonio, as being one of their oldest, dating from about 1690, when it was built by the Spaniards: Texas at that period having belonged to Mexico, under the rule of Spain.

It still retains many of its Spanish features—the plaza de Alamo being surrounded by the principal buildings, amongst which the Spanish fortress-church of the Alamo is the great point of interest. In 1836 this fortified church was besieged by the Mexicans under General Santa Anna, Texas having declared for independence; and after twelve days of gallant resistance was carried by assault, and the whole of the little American garrison of 165 men, under Crockett, ruthlessly slaughtered. “Remember Alamo” became the American cry—fully avenged during the Mexican War.

The plaza is adorned with fine groves of Alamo trees (cotton-wood), an opera house and the Federal Building. The San Antonio river winds in and out through the city, and the Plaza de las Yslas is prettily decorated with groves of orange trees, and the Plaza de Armas contains a fine city hall, and the cathedral, of somewhat imposing exterior but very poor interior.

The climate is thought to be exceedingly agreeable and equable, and much recommended for consumptives. There are pleasant drives in various directions outside the town, especially those leading to the interesting old (for U.S.A. *i.e.* dating from about 1731) Spanish "missions," two or three of which are extremely picturesque, mostly built of adobe, and in the usual solid castellated style with handsome cloisters, planted round with beautiful groves of trees and gardens.

It was a lovely day, and very pleasant wandering among these Spanish memories, and the extensive parks and the green banks of the lazily-flowing river, and then to a more distant moorland where, we were told, we should find a lovely lake, which, after a long, long walk, turned out to be a very tiny one—a mere pond, in fact—but the whole scene pretty in the sunset rays.

Returning to the town we had supper at a good hotel in the Plaza de Alamo, after which we returned to the "depot," as it must now be called, and started at 9 p.m. for New Orleans, which we reached the following evening at 9 p.m., after a twenty-four hours' journey, *via* Honston, through perfectly flat, fertile, grazing, and cultivated country. Not far from San Antonio lies the gigantic ranch belonging to Mrs. King, occupying 700,000 acres of magnificent grazing land (more than 1,000 square miles) stocked with more than 100,000 cattle and horses. This is the biggest ranch owned by one person in all the States, and the proprietress superintends it entirely herself.

It had been dark for some time before we reached New Orleans, so we went straight to the hotel, the "St. Charles," from the roof of which is a splendid view of the city and the windings of the mighty Mississippi, with its thick and

muddy waters, due to its junction with the turbid Missouri, not far from St. Louis, and next morning (December 6th) were ready to start at 5 a.m. to see as much of the city as possible during the few hours of our stay. Many of the streets are broad and well shaded with beautiful trees, and many lovely lemon and orange groves and gardens full of bright flowers adorn the squares. The Cathedral of St. Louis is imposing, and many of the public and other buildings are handsome, but the city did not strike us as an agreeable or healthy place to live in, most of it standing below the level of the river at high water, and having to be protected by an embankment fourteen feet high and fifteen wide, which does not always prevent its being nearly swamped.

It is curious to think of this city and the whole State of Louisiana, at that time of such gigantic extent—now divided into twelve great states and territories—sold to the United States by Napoleon I., in 1803, for fifteen million dollars!

One quarter of the city remains entirely French, and prides itself on the great beauty and grace of its fair Creole inhabitants. A certain amount of dark Spanish beauty is also to be seen, but the painful negro race predominates over these and other European settlers.

There are no parks to speak of, but the cemeteries are exceedingly fine and extensive, full of handsome monuments shaded by huge and magnificent magnolias and live oaks, and grand avenues of venerable cypresses with their hoary covering of gray Spanish moss.

At 11.30 a.m. we resumed our journey, beginning with a *mauvais quart-d'heure* crossing, on the usual trestle-bridge without protection, over a broad "mouth" of the Mississippi. The track runs refreshingly and delightfully close

to the blue waters of the Gulf (of Mexico) dotted here with many pretty little islands, passing through a small piece of the State of Alabama to Pensacola (Florida) with a fine harbour, just after passing which we had a truly awful experience, crossing over Escambia Bay on a terribly high unprotected trestle-bridge three miles long! which gave one the creeps; and soon after, another, almost as long, over the Appalachicola river, the Appalachicola depot being likewise raised bodily on high trestles above the river.

On for hours, through absolutely flat but richly fertile and well cultivated cotton land, till darkness supervened, and the long cars became so crowded and disagreeable that I changed into the abhorred "sleeper," in which for once and only once I was able to persuade the conductor and negro porter to allow me to sit up all night in my compartment, instead of having it made up into a bed and the upper berth pulled down over it.

We travelled all through the night and, unluckily, during the darkness, passed Tallahassee, the capital of Florida, which is said to be charmingly situated on a hill 280 feet high—the only hill in Florida that can be called such—embowered in beautiful groves and gardens.

As soon as it was light we found ourselves speeding through flat country presenting the features mostly found in Florida, *i.e.*, more or less dense and fine forests of pine and fir, sprinkled with wild orange and fig trees, and luxuriant undergrowth of brilliantly-green palmetto; here and there clearings for settlers, and ranches planted with orange groves one mass of golden fruit, and many other varieties of fruit trees.

At 8 a.m. (December 7th) we reached Jacksonville, the most important city, commercially, of Florida, large and

well built, wide streets and squares, beautifully shaded with orange and other trees.

After hurriedly breakfasting at a restaurant, G. went on by train to St. Augustine, whilst I hurried down to the ferry-boat across the wide Matanza river—starting on its further side at once, by the Jacksonville and Atlantic railroad, to Pablo Beach—one of the most charming seaside nooks I know. The train runs across the island, through seventeen miles of the sunniest and most delightful forest of tall pines, with a luxuriant undergrowth of palmetto and wild fruit trees, cleared at rare intervals for plantations of orange, lemon, fig, and pomegranate—wild roses and flowering creepers abounding.

Within a mile or two of the sea the forest has been cleared, but the dense and brilliantly-green mass of palmetto still decks the open space, though which the train runs to the very edge of the moderate cliff overhanging the sparkling blue Atlantic ocean, with magnificent sands, ideal for bathing, stretching away to right and left into far distance.

These sands are delightful for walking, riding, or driving—the heaviest wagon makes no mark—and many are the delicate and lovely shells to be found. The cliffs are of richly-coloured yellow, pink, and red sandstone, crowned with the vividly-green palmetto.

I thought it an enchanting spot—at any rate for one day—and more than one day it is, at present, impossible to spend there; for no sooner rises, with American quickness, a fine hotel, than comes the incendiary and burns it down. Two hotels which I was told were worthy to compare with the best had been burnt, one after another, within the previous year; and so surely does this happen, not only here but in many other resorts, that the insurance

companies, in places where for some reason new hotels seem not to be desired, decline any longer to effect insurance, the fire-doom being next to a certainty.

Many of the well-to-do of Jacksonville have charming villas here, built (as is often the case in America) several feet above the ground, resting on short square pillars of brick or stone, the air circulating freely beneath—a good way of keeping houses dry.

The villas themselves are mostly of wood with wide verandas covered with gay creepers and plants in pots, roses twining round the supporting pillars. These flowery verandas are all over Florida the great ornament of the houses, and are furnished with comfortable rocking-chairs, much used by the dwellers.

I spent a long delightful day here wandering about revelling in sunshine, and had an excellent tea at a charming little cottage, one mass of creepers and flowers, close to the sea, to which day visitors were directed; after which, late in the afternoon, the train returned to the ferry, where I wandered about for some time amidst charming villas and gardens and orange groves of great size, grand pines and giant cypresses with their drapery of Spanish moss, before re-crossing the ferry into Jacksonville; whence at 8 p.m. I started by train for St. Augustine, arriving at 10 p.m., and joined G. at the Cordoba Hotel, in the grand plaza, which is beautifully laid out with lawns, fountains, and palms, orange and lemon trees, and beds of dazzling flowers; one whole side occupied by the huge and magnificent hotel "Ponce de Léon," and another by the almost equally splendid "Alcazar"—neither of these yet open for the winter—and other fine buildings and villas embowered in flowers and gardens. In short, nothing of its kind could be finer or more gay.

than this plaza, brilliant electric light and an exquisite moon shining upon its fountains and rich vegetation, and still more lovely next morning in brilliant sunshine and radiant blue sky. The "Cordoba," too, is excellent and very handsome.

We breakfasted at 6.30 and then walked into the plaza and beyond it to Fort Marion, fine and extensive fortifications, guarded from inroad of water by a strong sea-wall, the whole built of "coquina"—a curious stone found in quarries on the beach, consisting entirely of minute portions of shells crushed into one solid mass—fronting the sparkling narrow arm of sea which divides the mainland from the wooded island of Anastasia.

The view from the high ramparts of Fort Marion (which took a century to build, and was begun by the Spaniards in 1656) is very pleasing. We were shown over the fort by a charming old soldier who, in his own person, constitutes the entire garrison, and who had seen much service, and had written an excellent little abridged history of Florida entitled "Ponce de Léon land" in remembrance of the ill-fated discoverer of this flowery land, who—seven years before Cortés set foot in Mexico—in the loveliness of its flowery spring tide, landed here on April 3rd, 1512, that day being Easter Sunday—in Spanish the feast of "Pascua Florida"—to commemorate which he gave the land the name of Florida.

He was a Spanish cavalier of great note and fame but stricken in years—by reason of which his beautiful and youthful betrothed in Spain refused to become his bride till he should present himself before her made young again; and there being in those days current a widespread legend of a distant land beyond seas in which, deep in forest shade, lay a "fountain of eternal spring,"

bathing in which, the most aged would at once renew his youth—on this quest he sailed and touched at many points of Hispaniola and Cuba, seeking in vain the fabled fountain; and putting to sea again came upon this unknown, fragrant flowery land. In vain he tried the waters of every spring he came to, and on a second voyage, to make a further search, was attacked by Indians, and being wounded was carried to Cuba and there expired.

Since his time this smiling land has been the theatre of almost perpetual war and massacre.

In 1528 Panfilio Narvaez took formal possession in the name of Spain, and soon after, being blown out to sea whilst in a small boat and never more heard of, his followers were attacked by Indians, and with difficulty made their way to the newly conquered Spanish settlements in Mexico.

The renowned De Soto in 1537 tried in vain to effect a settlement; and next came a colony of French Huguenots in 1564 under Ribaut and Laudonnière, who settled on the S. John's river, but were eventually ruthlessly massacred and their settlement destroyed by the Spanish Adelantado, Ménendez, sent by Philip II. to rescue his dominion out of the hands of heretics (although at the time at peace with the French king, Charles IX.). A retaliatory massacre of Spaniards by a French armament fitted out privately by De Gourges followed; and in 1586 Sir Francis Drake, returning from South America, landed on Anastasia Island, and finding the fort of St. Augustine on the opposite mainland deserted—during a temporary absence of Ménendez who had newly built it—took possession of £2,000 left in the treasury chest, and after burning the adjacent houses to avenge the death of one of his men, sailed away.

St. Augustine was rebuilt by Ménendez, who also established missions in many parts of Florida, most of which were destroyed by the Indians; succeeding missionaries, however, making many converts among them.

After innumerable vicissitudes, in which the English and French played the most important part—during the course of which Florida was ceded to England (in 1763), and restored by her to Spain (1783)—the Spanish standard at Fort Marion was finally lowered to make place for that of the Stars and Stripes, in 1821. Since which, till quite recent years, the chronicles of Florida record one succession of murders, desultory fighting, and massacres by the Seminole and Apache Indians, in which the valiant chiefs, Osceola and "Wild Cat" played a prominent part. As late as 1886, seventy-six of the latest Indian captives were imprisoned in Fort Marion, where Serjeant Brown, who had been in charge of them, says they behaved on the whole very well, and were eventually released and sent out of Florida into northern states.

The Museum, and other sights of St. Augustine, we postponed till after our return, having decided to start at once on a tour through Florida.

So we left our heavy baggage at the "Cordoba" and hastened to the station to catch the 11.30 a.m. train southward.

CHAPTER XX.

Florida—Indian River—Lake Worth—Winter Park—Tampa Bay—St. Petersburg—Tarpon Springs—Silver Springs—Oklawaha River—Palatka.

AT first the line turns inland, as far as Palatka, on the S. John's river, then outward again till it touches the coast at Ormond—a very attractive sea resort. The aspect of the country is everywhere much the same. Pine forests, with occasional clearings for ranches surrounded by orange plantations, a soil of silvery, very fine white sand, densely covered with palmetto and wild orange trees. It is bright and pretty, but after a time becomes a little monotonous, except in the richer districts, where you simply revel in gorgeous fruit-land, and fancy yourself transported into the golden garden of the Hesperides.

At Ormond begins the Indian River, so called, which is really not a river at all, but merely a still, motionless, salt-water lagoon, lying parallel with the ocean, with which it is connected by one or two narrow inlets, and from which it is divided by a narrow strip of land, for a distance of 218 miles, its breadth varying from about 100 yards to 6 miles.

It is a dreamy, sheeny expanse of oily water, taking beautiful reflections of exquisite shades of blue; and its banks are mostly clothed with rich vegetation—grand palms and magnolias, giant yuccas, fig trees, vines, and

vast groves of orange trees, one glowing mass of golden, delicious fruit. In some parts, forests of grand pine, and huge cypresses overhung with their usual drapery of Spanish moss; with dense undergrowth of palmetto, concealing under its bright green foliage savages, such as wild cats of hideous strength and ferocity, scorpions, "rattle" and innumerable other venomous snakes, and giant centipedes horrible to behold and deadly to feel, which everywhere abound in the wilder parts, where pumas and bears may occasionally be also seen. Nowhere are more deadly reptiles and insects found than in this bland and smiling Florida.

From Ormond the train runs the whole way close to the edge of the flat western shore of the river, passing many prosperous little towns; the oily water taking exquisite tints of rose and scarlet as the sun sank low—its setting followed by a marvellous afterglow of vividest orange and crimson—fading suddenly into semi-darkness. At 10 p.m. we reached, in brilliant moonlight, Lake Worth, at the southern extremity of the river, where the train stops within a few yards of the immense and magnificent Hotel Poinciana, fronting the shining lake, and surrounded by exquisite terraced gardens and superb avenues and groves of graceful cocoa-palm, and every variety of exotic shrub and tree and brilliant flower.

Next day was a dream of tranquil, delicious beauty—the charm of charms, to wander away to eastward, through groves of lemon and palm, and great aromatic shady trees, over a sandy path matted with flowers, guided and drawn by the ever-alluring song of the sea, only one little quarter of a mile away.

You rise up a slight incline and find yourself—joy! face to face with the shining waves of ocean rising and falling—

long shimmering lines of glassy green, breaking in sounding, deep-toned music into sheets of creamy snow-foam on the silvery, shell-strewn glistening strand.

The poetic charm of this ocean-view is—as is, alas! inevitable—marred by the “useful,” in the shape of a huge building containing sea-baths of every description, concert-rooms, great swimming-pools in which swimmers, clad in gay costumes, may disport themselves to the sound of music; in short, all the usual gigantic paraphernalia of American bathing establishments.

A sloping path leads down to the sands, wonderful as all Florida sands are, where you can wander, picking up pearly shells, close to the splash and music of the glittering waves, and forget that such things as fellow creatures exist, and bask and revel in the beauty and joy of the, alas! too fugitive present.

In this true home for the “Lotus-eaters,” we rested—only one whole day! Then on, on!

December 10th. Seven a.m. saw us seated in the train, retracing our steps as far as Titusville. This—such is the irony of life!—quite the *least* interesting spot on the whole river, with a more than indifferent hotel, was, unluckily, the only place possible to stop at the following night, so as to “connect” with the inconvenient branching-off line; so here we had to waste the whole afternoon, wandering, ankle-deep in white sand, along the banks of the lagoon, prettily wooded I admit, with pines and very tall and curious tree-yuccas. Walking, almost everywhere in Florida is very fatiguing, by reason of this deep universal white sand; which, contrary to what one would expect, is the most fertile of soils, and will grow any and every grain, vegetable, and fruit. In what are called the “hammock” lands, the sand is mixed with richer soil, in which the

orange, and most tropical plants, especially delight, but is too rich for the lemon, which affects the lighter sand.

Next morning we started by the earliest train (at 8 a.m.), quitting the banks of the dreamy, sleepy, Indian river, through the usual stretches of pine, palmetto, and orange groves, stopping for an hour at midday at the flourishing little town of Sanford, embowered in immense magnolias, and orange trees of course. A good little hotel here, where we had luncheon, and at 2 p.m. proceeded by train, an hour's journey, to Winter Park.

Here the orange groves are perfectly superb—giant trees simply weighed down with fruit; huge grape-fruit (pomelo) trees, of which the fruit looks like golden cannon-balls, thousands ripe on each tree. Pomegranates, Japanese persimmons (a beautiful scarlet fruit), tamarinds, figs, mangoes, pintee (Chinese peach), kumguats, a delicious little fruit looking like a tiny orange, but belonging to the citrus family—in short, there is simply no end to the exquisite fruit plantations, all carefully placed at the right distance and watered and kept in the most admirable order, all the houses pretty and neat, each with its veranda embowered in brilliant flowers, inviting repose with its numerous rocking-chairs, and each with its surrounding fragrant and lovely garden.

In this land of innumerable lakes, Winter Park of course is not without; and the pretty white-sanded shores that surround its pond are fragrant with exquisite lemon groves. In bathing in this and other lakes in Florida the risk has to be run of swarming insects, very minute, which burrow in the feet or legs of the bather, and there lay their eggs, with most unpleasant results, for it is almost impossible to extract them.

After wandering for a long time in this true garden of

the Hesperides, we went to the Hotel Rogers, a charming little house—one mass of jasmine and roses, daturas, and bignonias. A delightful wide balcony above, into which the bedrooms open, as well as below, full of flowers and rocking-chairs. A lovely garden all round, and indescribably beautiful and magnificent orange trees, literally covered with fruit in all stages of size and colour, from the most delicate shades of green and pale yellow to deep gold, the scent of the flowers too delicious for words.

After dark, and we had returned from the most enchanting walk through this wonderful fruit-land, a violent thunder-storm came on, torrents of rain refreshing the beautiful trees, and still more bringing out their exquisite fragrance.

Next morning the clouds had cleared, and the sky was blue and serene as ever, and the time passed rapidly and delightfully, wandering amid these endless groves of trees, as striking for their lofty and beautiful forms as for their incredible wealth of fruit; passing, among many fine villas, the huge Seminole Hotel, not yet open for the winter; sketching and visiting with our kind and hospitable landlady, Mrs. Rogers, her superb plantations of fruit trees.

She has also the most lovely garden, full of rare and exquisite flowers and plants, which she cultivates *con amore* and the greatest skill and success, having originally planted or grafted every single tree herself, all the time refreshing me with specimens of her choicest and most exquisite fruit: the guava being one of the most delicious to eat fresh, although it is mostly made into jelly and preserves.

One whole side of her hotel was shaded by a splendid specimen of the “royal Poinciana,” a most graceful and lovely tree with immense spreading branches of delicate bright green foliage, something between that of the mimosa

and a sensitive plant. It bears masses of red or yellow flowers and huge seed-pods. Mrs. Rogers showed me a number of the lovely Bermuda "shell-plant" covered with delicate and most fragrant white and pink flowers, a night-blooming jessamine with exquisitely sweet white flowers of very large size, bignonias of every colour, mangoes, persimmons, tamarinds, bananas, roses without end, all the while loading me with densely-laden branches which, in spite of my entreaties, she ruthlessly tore from her most beautiful trees—sweet-lemons, so deliciously refreshing, oranges, lemons, grape-fruit, the delicious little kumquat, with which she filled my pockets and every nook and cranny in my boxes and bags.

With great regret we tore ourselves from this veritable garden of Eden, and at 6 p.m. walked to the depot, dense masses of inky cloud heralding another storm, which, just as we entered under shelter, came down in violent torrents amidst deafening claps of thunder and incessant lightning, magnificent but terrific.

At 10 p.m. we reached Tampa Bay, every moment vividly lighted up by the lightning, which continued to superbly illumine the sky the whole night. Fortunately the train, as it were, drives up to the door of the great hotel, so we merely had to alight and run in, to find ourselves in a sort of Aladdin's palace.

It accommodates with comfort 1,000 persons. Lofty and wide galleries rather than corridors, richly carpeted, the sides lined with rows of magnificent vases of every description of china and majolica, and superb *cloisonné* from China and Japan, holding the loveliest exotic plants and immense palms, tree-ferns and bamboos. The suites of "parlours," exquisitely decorated and furnished; priceless French specimens, several of which had belonged to

Marie Antoinette; tapestry and paintings, wonderful collections of old china, and choicest old Venetian glass—in short, a luxury and lavish magnificence that would be incredible were it not for the fact that Mrs. Plant, the wife of the millionaire head of the great "Plant line" of railroads and steamers to which this palatial hotel belongs, looks upon it as her "country-house," and has furnished and decorated it with all the splendid and beautiful things that she has collected from all over the world.

She looks upon the "parlours" as her own particular "salons," in which she receives her friends, graciously allowing the "guests" of the hotel to make use of them, whether she is "at home" or not.

The entire hotel is a kind of apotheosis of luxury and comfort, including the cookery, and not forgetting the admirable musicians, who, either in the garden or the great hall, are perpetually discoursing sweet strains of Schubert and Chopin, Schumann and Wagner.

Next morning (December 14th) a cloudless sky and radiant sunshine revealed fresh beauties. The whole immense frontage of the hotel is occupied by a wide, raised stone veranda one mass of the most exquisite flowering creepers, gorgeous yellow alamandas, Cape Jasmine, Marshal-Niel roses, and every description of beautiful flowering shrub in the broad flower-bed that borders it, of which the hibiscus are especially beautiful, one mass of bloom, vivid scarlet and delicate rose-pink, and the "royal Poincianas," of magnificent size and graceful beauty. From this immense veranda grand flights of steps descend into the garden and shrubberies, which are on the same gigantic and superb scale as the hotel, exquisitely laid out with fountains surrounded by beds of the rarest and most brilliant and beautiful flowers—every imaginable flower-



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ing shrub and plant—all carefully labelled with their botanical as well as more ordinary names, and the original habitat of each.

Many fine specimens of that peculiar and magnificently-graceful bamboo that we had so much admired in the Mexican "tierra caliente" near Tampico.

The lovely mango, with its delicately-tinted flowers and delicious fruit, and innumerable beautiful Japanese trees, including the familiar persimmon.

In short, no words can give any idea of the gorgeous beauty of this immense and ideal garden—it was perfect joy to spend hour after hour in the glowing sunshine, wandering, like the bee, from flower to flower, in this lovely fragrant paradise.

I never left it the whole delightful day, sketching and admiring. Many butterflies and gorgeous birds and bees flit about and suck the honey from the scented flowers the livelong day.

Once or twice the balmy, poetic stillness was broken by a number of parrots that had been taught to laugh, not talk. One would hear a gentle cachinnation at intervals; then little bursts of laughter quite gentle, then a little louder, louder still, and louder, ending in a shout. A pause; then, as if the joke was really quite too much, loud bursts without ceasing, winding up into wild and perfectly maniacal shrieks and yells of laughter—all in the most absolutely natural manner.

That night we had intended going to Port Tampa to catch the steamer to Key West *en route* to Cuba, but found at the last moment that we had been misinformed as to the fare, and consequently should have to wait till a further supply could reach us from Charleston. This would have made such a delay, that with great regret (still more

accentuated now) we gave up this trip, and decided to stay one day longer at this fascinating hotel, which I spent again in its garden of delight, basking in sunshine and sketching some of the rarer and more curious plants and flowers ; and, towards sunset, floundering through the deep white sand of the roads, past many charming villas and gardens and orange groves, down to the bay, which here is much shut in, with flat banks, uninteresting except for the beautiful orange groves ; indeed, the whole interest and charm of Tampa Bay lies in its wonderful hotel and still more wonderful surroundings.

There is excellent fishing in the bay, and equally good quail and wild-duck shooting in neighbouring marshes ; and G. had good sport on his way to Port Tampa, to which he walked with his gun, leaving me to join him by the 10 p.m. train.

For some reason not explained this train was three hours late ; but, as it “drives up” to the back door, one could await its arrival with equanimity, comfortably seated reading in a luxurious rocking-chair in the great hall. At 1 a.m. we heard the clang of its tardy bell, and it just gave time for the hotel passengers to jump in, and on we went to Port Tampa, which was reached in less than half an hour, the train passing on to the furthest end of the immensely long pier, at the extremity of which is perched the charming little “Tampa Port Inn,” surrounded by water on every side but one, in which you may fancy yourself “aboard” ship.

It belongs, of course, to the “Plant line,” and is most comfortable. At 6 a.m., by a heavenly sunrise, we had an excellent breakfast in the delightfully airy “dining-parlour,” the sides entirely of glass, the sea-breeze wafted refreshingly through the wide open windows ; after which

we merely had to walk to another part of the pier, and get into the large, comfortable ferry-boat to cross over the bay to St. Petersburgh.

The captain was most amiable, but much shocked at my saying how delightful it was to be on the sea once more ! “ Oh my ! this isn’t the sea, it’s only the bay ! ” “ Oh yes, but so pleasant to see the sea beyond the bay.” “ Oh my, no ! that isn’t the sea, it’s only the gulf, and ’way beyond that we call it the ocean. I guess we haven’t anything so small as ‘ seas ’ here ! ”

It took us about an hour to get across this narrow arm of the bay, its flat shores fringed with pines and orange trees, and the unvarying accompaniment of interminable hard silver sands : splendid for cycling, but that fashion had not yet penetrated. At St. Petersburgh we left the ferry-boat, and landed on the furthest extremity of a pier 2 miles long, along which the trains run to meet the steamers, but, unluckily, not the ferry-boat ; so, not caring to wait at the little waiting-room for a couple of hours till the next train should arrive, we proceeded to walk along the railway track. It was most unpleasant. The narrow pier stands on high trestles, at a giddy height above the dancing water, which you see sparkling ominously beneath you between the beams, which seem to sway from side to side—no banister, of course, or protection of any sort or kind—not being intended for pedestrians, and probably very rarely used by such, for the Americans never walk a yard if they can help it.

It really was a “ service of danger ! ” and I thought it one of the most trying of our numerous “ nerve-tests.”

Halfway there is a supplementary platform adjoining, for a large swimming establishment, which was a great relief, making a break and pause in our giddy career, the

horrible monotony of which did not seem the easier, however, afterwards. At last, to my joy, we landed on *terra firma*, and having several hours to wait I wandered along the white sandy shore, so firm and pleasant to walk on, with a background of beautiful pines and live oak, interspersed with wild orange and palmetto, twined with roses and pretty creepers for a long way ; then climbed up the low bank and walked back through charming woods, occasional villas, surrounded by gardens and groves, varying the scene—the soil, the usual loose white sand, so heavy to walk on. The sun was hot and delicious, and the aroma of the wild oranges and many other sweet-scented plants a joy, as I strolled back to the city, a very flourishing commercial one, and went to the Hotel Detroit, close to the other end of the pier, where I found G., who had been bathing ; and we had tea, and saw some wonderful shell-work by the daughter of the house—tables most beautifully inlaid with every variety of shell, their colours and forms admirably harmonized—real works of art, and most ingenious ; the whole of it her own design and handy-work. She was also a poetess, and very pretty and refined.

We went on by train in the later afternoon, travelling through much the same scenery as usual, to Tarpon Springs, where we arrived late by the loveliest moonlight. We walked through exquisite lemon groves, past pretty little villas, each with its flowery veranda and cosy rocking-chairs and charming garden, along a wide road of deep sand to the Tarpon Springs Hotel, where we found supper waiting, and everything very nice and comfortable.

December 16. Again a heavenly morning ! We breakfasted at 6.30, and then ran out to explore. Tarpon

Springs is certainly one of the most enchanting spots in all Florida. From the house-tops the waters of the Gulf (of Mexico) can be seen, glittering and sparkling, only a mile and a half distant. Close to the hotel lie the Springs. They consist of a series of little lakes of the loveliest turquoise-blue, bordered with the mossiest and greenest of turf, planted above with delicious fruit trees and brilliant flowers.

Admirably kept little white sand walks follow the intricacies of these translucent green-blue pools, in which every tree and flower is mirrored.

Beyond these charming "springs" you come upon a lovely flowery common, with superb groups of gigantic Italian-looking "umbrella" pines, while in the distance glitter the waters of the gulf.

A great river winds through this flowery sunny plain, lazily flowing with many a serpentine bend and curve, maddening who seeks a quick way to the sea.

It is the most poetically charming of scenes ! Then we wandered away on the opposite side, beyond the little town, into aromatic pine-woods along a broad green drive, half moss, half delicate grass, where, more than once, the vivid, golden-green carpet gave token of swamp, and we had to find a way round, deep in the thick palmetto and shrub—in mortal terror lest we should tread on a rattlesnake, or, perhaps, even more horrible puff-adder, or other of the hideous reptiles that fair Florida nurses in her tangled jungles !

However, we saw nothing more deadly than butterflies, and a quantity of squirrels with very fine tails.

Here the ground is not so flat, and, after some time, rising up a gentle eminence, almost to be called a tiny hill, where the wooded ground undulates prettily, we

found ourselves overlooking a wide blue lake, stretching to distant right and left, its distant opposite banks clothed with densely-wooded forest.

It sparkled and gleamed through masses of pine and live oak and arbutus, just sufficiently cleared to give space for a very small and very commonplace villa, with nothing pretty about it—not an orange grove or fruit tree within sight—with only an ugly, straight veranda in front, undecorated with a single creeper or flower, and not the slightest attempt at a garden—with nothing, in short, to attest its habitat in flowery Florida—for here the ground was sandy and bare, not even palmetto, only the bare trees rising out of the wilderness, the one desolate spot in a neighbourhood flowing with milk and honey.

This, we were surprised to find, was the “Florida home” of the late Duke of Sutherland. The lake it commands (the only prettiness of its view) bears the unpoetical name of Butler. It may, possibly, contain fish, a meagre attraction.

Having satisfied our curiosity, we were glad to retrace our steps into more attractive land; and, having again successfully braved the hidden dangers of the jungle to avoid being stuck in the swamps, we found ourselves just in time for a good little dinner of roast beef and plum-pudding, in honour of old England. At these smaller towns “dinner” is in the middle of the day, and supper at night.

After dinner I wandered about, sketch-book in hand, among the gardens and the lovely “springs,” which are also of great medicinal fame; along shadowy green lanes bordered by oleanders, superb palms, and magnolias—on to the breezy common, one mass of brilliant wild flowers, under grand groups of giant pines—a dreamy *dolce far*

niente, till long past sunset and gorgeous afterglow ; and home by moonlight, just before supper was put away.

G. had spent an instructive afternoon with a pleasant young American, partner of a company which has the monopoly of the great sponge fisheries in this sea.

Next day we had to leave this most attractive and charming little town ; so I was ready at 4 a.m., long before dawn, to run out and finish, as soon as it should be light enough, a sketch in the spring gardens.

A glorious sunrise brought joy and warmth after the sharp cold of the night, and at 6.30 a rush to the Florida Central to catch the 7 o'clock train to Ocala, which we reached at 11 a.m., through dense groves of superb orange and lemon, with an occasional pine-wood.

The orange groves of Ocala are famous for the enormous quantity of fruit exported ; and magnificent palms and magnolias glorify its villas and streets.

Here we engaged a nice little open carriage, with a good strong horse, driven by a smiling negro (the black coachmen are all excellent "whips," and very kind to their horses) to take us to Silver Springs, six miles off, to which, he said, he knew a short cut through the woods, by which he took us, winding in the deep sand in and out among the trees where track there was none, often tumbling into holes but managing not to upset us, and finally depositing us safely at the door of a little villa where a Miss Gordon-Richards takes in travellers—three fine hotels in succession having been "marked for his own" by the usual incendiary and burnt to the ground, one after another, as soon as ready for the reception of guests.

Miss Gordon-Richards gave us luncheon, and explained that she was nearly related to the great General Gordon, of

whom she was naturally exceedingly proud, and especially of being thought very like him in face and character.

A Scotch lady, also a cousin, keeps house with her, and they seem to reign over the tiny hamlet of Silver Springs, which presents no special beauty except some fine india-rubber trees, till, after following a path for a short distance through the rather uninteresting wood, you come, suddenly, upon a revelation.

The far-famed Silver Springs! the “fountain of eternal youth,” sought for, far and wide, in vain, by the unhappy Ponce de Léon!

These Springs, said to have been the fabled, “youth-renewing fountain” of Indian tradition are unutterably beautiful! a large and wide nearly circular basin, several acres in extent, is surrounded by low white rocks covered with lichen and moss of a deep rich velvety green, beyond which rise brilliant masses of feathery poplars of every shade of vivid gold and tender rose; and a background of tall shadowy cypresses, all closely veiled and shrouded in silvery moss, endless rows of spectral phantoms guarding the wells; the water itself, a miracle of beauty—smooth as a polished mirror, clear as crystal, its glassy, sheeny surface ever-changing from subtle tint to tint—tints for which there are no words; so delicately and insensibly, like strains of music almost too fine for human ear, playing from etherealized greens of every exquisite shade to gold, with heavenly notes of bright blue, and glittering silver, and rich, broad bands of glorious purple, shading to crimson and orange; and all this radiant sumptuousness of crystal unutterable colour so infinitely and luminously transparent, that, from the edge of the rocks, you gaze down, sixty feet deep, and see distinctly, through tremulously waving rays of light, the silvery sandy floor covered with little pearly

shells, and myriads of darting fishes, and green-gold delicate waving grasses—all weaving and blending into more and more exquisite harmonies of prismatic lovely colour and shine.

It seems a desecration, but you get into a little boat, and glide over the wonderful expanse, and see the silvery fountains bubbling up, and at the centre, gaze down fathomless depths, into a fearful chasm betwixt two snow-white chains of rock, rifted violently asunder, so limpidly clear the crystal element, that you feel the boat should sink down, and down, there being, apparently, nothing tangible for it to float on!

Several times a week, rushes into this ideal fairy-pool, a fussing little steamer of strange unwieldy shape, beating and stirring the silver surface with noisy, irreverent screw ; and a mill dares to make use of the glassy water, and profane swimmers plunge into its ice-cold depths—but nothing makes less the ever-serene and pellucid beauty of this marvellous magic mirror.

I sat on a rock at the edge till dark, trying to sketch some faint and humble reminiscence, and the moon arose, gleaming mysteriously on the ghostly trees around, and cold mists floated vaguely, and I fled to Miss Gordon's villa to supper, after which she conducted us to a second villa she possesses a few yards off, where she gave us rooms for the night.

Next morning she gave us an early breakfast at the other villa, after which she accompanied us to the Springs, and we glided about in a boat, rowed by the miller's son, out of the magic crystal circle, round a hidden bend, into the wide silvery river, unseen before, which carries away in a transparent crystal stream the ever-rising fountains of the Silver Springs.

The banks are lovely—tall flowering reeds of vividest green, innumerable palms and the high ghostly background of dense, veiled, moss-draped cypresses.

Gliding and sketching in the golden sunshine, each arrow of light revealing some new and lovelier symphony of colour, the morning passed ; and we returned for luncheon, and then to the pier to await the arrival of the fussy steamboat which was to take us away from this wondrous dream of enchantment.

At 3 p.m. its ungainly form noisily fussed in, and we took leave of our amiable hostess and stepped on board, and soon started down the river, which for eight miles glides along as clear and crystal as at its parent Springs.

There it joins the turbid Oklawaha, and for a time, its limpid lovely waters hold their own, but gradually, alas ! become merged in the muddy current of that dweller in swamps.

The 150 miles' run of the Oklawaha ("dark crooked water") is difficult to describe. Parts of it are extraordinarily beautiful—the giant palms and palmettos and vividly-green vegetation being, in many parts, magnificently luxuriant. Everywhere it is weird and strange, and entirely different from every other river in the world, except one or two in Florida, which in some minor degree resemble it. It passes through dense forests of live oak and cypress ; some bends of the river are exquisite pictures, thickly massed with white water-lilies, and beautiful bright green reedy grasses on the banks.

Here and there a log seems to float along which is really an alligator. Huge and horrid snakes may be seen twining and curling in the swampy grasses, and the gigantic cypresses are all shrouded in ghostly hangings of gray

moss, the live oaks similarly veiled, giving a mournful, funereal look to the scene.

In some parts the river widens, wreathed again with lilies and lovely aquatic plants. At others it narrows till there is scarcely room for the little steamer to pass, its sides bumping heavily against first on one side then the other, its passengers nearly swept off its decks by thick overhanging palms and palmettos, which brush across one's face and nearly drag one off one's chair.

Wild tiger-cats and ounces may be seen creeping stealthily up the great cypresses where they arch over and overhang the dark river, and you feel as if they might pounce down and claw you up into the trees; pumas, also, we were told, abound.

Sometimes for many miles there are no banks at all; the bed of the river being merely tracked by cypresses, in one great lake of wooded dismal swamp as far as the eye can reach; their swollen trunks bulging out enormously and most ungracefully, and unwholesomely, as if afflicted with dropsy, for a distance of several feet before trunk and roots are merged in the horrid muddy water.

Here and there we pass a raft, paddled along by a sickly-looking man carrying lumber (wood); and occasional "stations" are passed, with small spaces cleared for great stacks of lumber, and a wooden house built upon piles, with a few offices for the post, etc., occupied by some wood-man—ghastly-looking places where malaria and ague reign.

For the first time for many months, as we struggled along, the sun enshrouded itself in clouds, and the previous delicious warmth changed to a raw cold; consequently, we missed much of the beauty of this spectral river, which consists so greatly in shade and shine and varying lights and reflections. As the night came on a bitterly-cold raw

wind blew in our faces, and G. and most of the passengers (of whom there were few) retired to the shelter of their warm and neat little cabins after supper ; and I, therefore, the only occupant of the deck, had my rocking-chair to myself, icy-cold, but nothing in the world would have induced me to miss one moment of the marvellous interest of the weird night-journey. So there I sat, the whole night, shivering but happy, and thought with scorn of the silly comfort-seekers in the cabins.

As soon as it was dark, huge pine torches were lighted and threw a lurid resinous glare on the river and wonderful vegetation. It so happened that during the night we passed through by far the finest groves. Out of the swamps, and where magnificent and gigantic palms cast the loveliest shadows, great magnolia trees, live oaks and giant cypresses in their hoary shrouds of moss, looming forth in uncanny shapes like shadowy spectres, wild vines wreathing and creeping over the trees, hanging in long tangles, catching one in the face ; creepy rustlings among the overhanging branches, with an occasional rush of a wild cat pursuing its prey, enormous, many-headed tree-yuccas nodding above, as we pursued the narrow water-lane, rubbing against their trunks and roots, winding and turning, through such constant, narrow twisting bends, that no care on the part of the steersman could prevent banging up against the banks in turning—the boat swinging and staggering, and rocking and listing as if about to capsize (which it has been several times known to do), sharp ends of thick branches once or twice ramming holes into its tough wooden sides ; great bushy palms and palmettos brushing over the deck, nearly sweeping it clear of its contents and solitary occupier, and what an awful spot to be upset or drowned in ! thick muddy swampy water, and crocodile jaws ready

to save one from a watery grave! the weird and splendid effects of the ruddy glare of the torches on the illumined surroundings, in short, a scene of grand and picturesque, yet gruesome beauty, and of excitement and risk and hair-breadth escapes, absolutely unique!

The captain told us that the sense of responsibility and anxiety, and the difficulties and dangers of these innumerable sharp turnings and windings in the narrow river (I think he said there were 470 in the 135 miles!) are such that the pilots never get accustomed to these risky night-journeys, and after two years, at the most, of this dangerous night-work, completely lose their nerve, and are absolutely worn out. The steering apparatus is tremendously powerful, and largely provided with brakes of enormous strength, to prevent the little lumpy boat from being banged to pieces, or upset, in the sharp and short and narrow twistings of this well-named “dark crooked water.”

With the dawn, the clouds rolled off, and though the icy blasts of wind continued, by degrees the sun thawed and cheered and warmed the atmosphere, and the lights and reflections became very lovely at times.

Through dismal cypress-swamps we passed into drier spaces covered with luxuriant vegetation, and many scarlet flamingoes and snow-white herons brightened the banks, fishing for their early breakfast, and a hideous creature called a water-turkey—more snake than bird, consisting mostly of a neck, wriggling and twisting like a snake’s, with a venomous-looking flat viper-like head—huge turtles, and many beautiful golden orioles and other birds of gorgeous plumage.

Our boat carried the mails, so we stopped at various landings to throw down mail-bags and parcels, and to take in the same.

At 8 a.m. a nice hot breakfast was very comforting and made us soon feel like giants refreshed ; and gradually the " crooked river " widened, there were fewer bangs and bumps against the banks, and where there were none and merely bulging trees, how the steersman was able to find his way passes comprehension ! However, through some lovely wider stretches the " dark crooked water " now took us, and before long emerged into civilization, flowing into the broad and straight St. John's, up which we steamed more rapidly, its flat banks covered with graceful cotton-trees, magnolias and palms, and innumerable orange groves golden with fruit, till about noon, when our quaint little humpy-bumpy boat, having gallantly performed its duty, landed us at Palatka, a lovely little town full of superb orange and lemon groves, each tree of gigantic size, simply dazzling with, as it were, showers and cascades of fruit ! enormous magnolias and brilliant flowers.

The air continued somewhat sharp, but the sunshine was bright and hot as ever, and we spent three delightful hours peregrinating this charming little city and its glorious orchards all along the green banks of the sparkling, blue St. John's.

At 3.30 p.m. our train started for St. Augustine, and we began by crossing the St. John's river, here two miles wide, to East Palatka on its opposite bank, on a high and narrow trestle-bridge, of course without protection of any sort or kind, which seemed to sway and tremble and shake in the strong though quiet current of the wide and mighty river. We crept along at the usual foot's pace, the train rolling from side to side like a ship, and twenty minutes of this entertainment passed before we were safely landed on the opposite side ; and I thought it quite the most alarming experience we ever had ! One felt that, if the current

should wax only a *little* stronger, or the wind should blow, or the slightest *contretemps* occur, the train would inevitably capsize off the unprotected track into the yawning flood beneath!

It is really a quite awful test of nerve, and I don't feel to wish to go over it again!

It was a relief to touch solid earth, but the crossing is an experience you don't at once get over! On we went, through admirable fruit-land, after having paused a short time at East Palatka, then pines and palmetto, and at 4.30 p.m. reached St. Augustine—in time to walk about the environing country, which is not interesting, and the sand terribly deep and fatiguing, till, about 8 p.m., we reached the splendid plaza with its glittering fountains, and returned to our comfortable and excellent hotel, the "Cordoba."

CHAPTER XXI.

St. Augustine—Museum—Ponce de Léon and Alcazar Hotels—Anastasia Island—South Beach—Savannah—Charleston—Fort Sumter—Columbia—Mount Airy.

THE following morning (December 20th) brilliant sunshine, but a certain raw sharpness in the air. We were ready at 7.30 to begin sight-seeing, commencing with Fort Marion and the adjacent museum, which contains many interesting historical relics, implements of Indian warfare, and a good geological and mineralogical collection.

Wandering again round the picturesque ramparts, towers, and bastions of Fort Marion and renewing acquaintance with our friend, the one-man garrison, we strolled back through the prettily planted Alameda to the central plaza, where, at eleven, we were to be shown over the famous Ponce de Léon Hotel, which opens for the winter season in January.

It is certainly an *hôtel de luxe*, the great central hall or rotunda, and huge dining-room 150 feet long, 90 wide, and parlours, all exceedingly gorgeous and elaborately decorated with marbles, wood-carvings, and paintings interesting as being descriptive of episodes in the stormy history of Florida; but, on the whole, I thought it rather ponderous, and not to compare in charm and cheerfulness with one or two others we had seen elsewhere.

However, it is very splendid, and the surrounding

gardens very charming, and the exterior is extremely imposing. Next, we were taken over the Alcazar Hotel opposite, which likewise opens in January; very fine, and boasts splendid sulphur baths, including a huge swimming-bath and a great hall, in which most things, including jewellery, can be bought, at somewhat exorbitant prices, and a museum of natural science.

After this we returned to our own comfortable "Cordoba" and had luncheon, after which we hurried to the pier on the central wharf just outside the Plaza de la Constitucion, leading from the grand sea-wall, built of coquina, which extends along the whole sea-front of the city—just in time to catch the ferry-boat which crosses, several times a day, over the narrow arm of sea dividing the mainland from Anastasia Island.

We soon landed on the island, where a small train waits to convey passengers to the South Beach, on the further, ocean side.

The track runs over low sandy hills densely covered with palmetto scrub and a few stunted pines and live oak. There are one or two good little inns at South Beach, the snow-white sands of which are delightful for bathing or any other purpose, and are covered with lovely shells of very delicate colouring.

The ocean was magnificent; a strong sea breeze stirred up great rolling waves which came thundering up the sandy beach, clouds of salt spray drenching the air and us.

It was charming! As soon as we could tear ourselves away from the beloved sea, after a long walk on the sands, we climbed up quite a little "mountain"—so unaccustomed is one in Florida to anything in the shape of a hill—on the top of which stands a grand and imposing lighthouse. I hadn't the energy, but G. mounted to its exceeding high

top, and reported a magnificent view of sea and land, and the two fine rivers, Matanzas and San Sebastian, and a bird's-eye view of the city. On our way back we made a *détour* to see the famous coquina quarries, which provided material for all the older parts of the city. This curious shell-stone is very ornamental, especially when combined with polished granite.

We returned by the last ferry-boat, and walked back through the brilliantly-lighted streets, in which are several good shops.

Next morning (December 21st) we were to separate—G. being obliged to return to England, and I wishing to stay on to see more of the New World—so he started by the 7 a.m. train to Fernandina, another much frequented sea resort thirty miles north-east of Jacksonville, and I stayed one day longer at St. Augustine, sketching various points of interest. The gardens of the “Zobaida Villa” are quite exquisite, but itself is built in rather poor “Moorish.”

On the whole we agreed that St. Augustine, but for its splendid hotels and plaza, is not a particularly attractive place, and in fact would be dull for any length of time, and cannot compare with many other of the Florida resorts. The environs are flat, with no beauty of vegetation, and the sand so heavy and deep that it is impossible to walk any distance, and nothing to walk to, and no drives. One would be always pining for wings to fly to the south-beach, its greatest point of attraction.

I left it next morning, with complete equanimity, for Fernandina. At Jacksonville the train has to cross the fearsome S. John's river by an iron bridge 1,320 feet long, and when we reached the middle we suddenly came to a standstill, and there remained *planté* for twenty minutes,

a portion of the bridge having been raised for some ships to pass down the river seaward.

In consequence I missed the train to Fernandina, so spent the time as best I could, sketching some very fine and very old live oaks of enormous size and palms in the park, and took tea at the huge St. James's Hotel before joining the 4.15 p.m. train to Savannah.

I left sunny Florida with much regret. There is such a reposeful charm in its beautiful orange groves and exquisite orchards and flowers and deep blue skies and golden sunshine and crystal springs, and far-spreading pine-forests, girded round by silvery sands and sparkling waves; but the charm, although extreme, is a dreamy and sleepy and perhaps slightly enervating and monotonous one, and has none of the soul-stirring beauty of Mexico, with its glorious mountains and divine "tierra caliente" and beautiful cities, the glamour of which was still too strongly upon us, perhaps, to allow us to appreciate, quite as highly as it deserves, the tranquil beauty of this wonderful fruit-land.

The train sped along flat cultivation and pine woods and plains covered with "Spanish bayonet" (*yueca filamentosa*) and cacti, and an hour or so after sunset reached Savannah (Forest City), full of trees and fine parks adorned with semi-tropical flowering shrubs and plants.

This I only saw vaguely by the electric light during the two or three hours of my stay, having decided to push on by the night train to Charleston.

When I got into the long car it was so hot and crowded that I requested the conductor to get me a berth in the "sleeper;" but, unluckily, it was already full to overflowing, so *nolens volens* I had to remain where I was, and to take the only vacant seat, one in the centre of the car,

almost on top of the stove, which, it being a particularly warm night, was of course one mass of burning coals, which threw out a heat simply stifling. Nevertheless, there I had to sit nearly all night, absolutely roasted, the negro porter constantly adding more and more fuel. It was useless to appeal to the conductor; he only shrugged his shoulders and said with a supercilious smile, "I guess it's warm." It would certainly have been a case of asphyxiation had it not been for a good-natured American who kindly begged me to take his seat, at some distance from this terrible stove, and placed himself quite happily in mine. All Americans seem to be absolute Salamanders, revelling and delighting in airless stifling heat, killing to a Britisher.

At last, at 4.30 a.m., this truly awful journey came to an end, and as I joyfully got out of the train who should I see but G., who had changed his programme and spent the previous day at Savannah, and had travelled in the same train without knowing I was in it. So we proceeded together to the Charleston Hotel, very large and fine and comfortable; had breakfast, and the day being Sunday (December 23rd) explored the neighbouring streets and squares till it was time to go to the high mass at the "cathedral"—a moderate sized church with a good organ and crowded congregation.

After this we had to tram to the depot to claim my trunks, of which I had lost the "checks," and for which I had to buy fresh ones at the cost of a dollar each; the amiable official politely assuring me that if the original checks should ever turn up the price of these should be returned.

Needless to say they never re-appeared.

After this a pleasant walk round part of the city and the river docks to White Point Gardens, prettily planted

with live oaks and flowering shrubs, open on two sides to the harbour, with a broad terrace walk raised upon the fine stone embankment.

Its east end is the "Battery," a grand esplanade 500 yards long, which commands a magnificent view of the extensive harbour and shipping, and the opposite "South Battery," and Forts Sumter and Moultrie and sundry small islands—the scene of the first conflict of the Federals and Confederates (March 4th, 1861).

South Carolina (so-called after Charles II.) which, even so far back as 1832, had declared for complete independence and autonomy of each separate state, was the first, in virtue of the "States'-rights doctrine," to pass an ordinance of secession on December 20th, 1860, an example which was followed by the six other "Cotton States" in the following February.

Meantime Charleston harbour was held for the union by Major Anderson, in command of a small garrison in Fort Moultrie, which, deeming of insufficient strength, he secretly evacuated during a dark night, and established himself in the stronger Fort Sumter. After the inauguration of Abraham Lincoln to the Presidency of the United States (Jefferson Davis having been previously elected to that of the "Confederate States"), active measures were taken to re-enforce the garrison of Fort Sumter; but the Federal ships having been storm-stayed outside the harbour bar, the Confederates took the initiative and at once bombarded the fort, which, after being nearly destroyed, was surrendered by Anderson. Encouraged by this success, four more states joined the Confederacy, and the terrible four years' Civil War began.

We were unable to visit Fort Sumter, the great "lion" of Charleston, the little harbour steamer not running on

Sundays, and a sailing boat would have taken too long; so I remained sketching on the "Battery" whilst G. went for a long walk with the British Consul.

In the afternoon there was the Magnolia Cemetery to visit, admirably kept, and full of lovely magnolias and azaleas, and grand live oaks funereally hung with gray Spanish moss.

All the residence houses are provided with verandas and balconies wreathed in flowering creepers, and mostly surrounded with ornamental gardens.

We returned to the hotel for dinner at seven, after which the British Consul joined us in the "parlour," and we had a pleasant talk till it was time for G. to leave for the depot to catch the 10 p.m. train to Richmond, *en route* to New York.

Next morning, December 24th, I started early to see the famous Gardens of Magnolia on the river Ashley, which in the spring must be perfectly lovely; full of the most superb *tree* azaleas, many of them 30 feet high, and huge japonicas and magnolias. Then back to the city, down Meeting Street, in which are the principal churches—the public buildings being mostly in the prettily-planted square close by, the centre of which is occupied by a statue of William Pitt (afterwards Earl of Chatham), erected in 1770, in gratitude for his great services to America in driving the French out of Canada, and his constant efforts and protestations, after his resignation of office in 1761, against the arbitrary policy of George III. towards colonial America; and in particular the repeal of the obnoxious Stamp Act in 1766 through his influence—as well as his eloquent and untiring denunciations, after his final resignation in 1768, of the aggravated persistence in that fatal policy.

There is also here a fine monument with a touching commemoration of the "flower of the youth of the city," who fought so bravely, and fell in such numbers, in the sad and terrible Civil War of '61-'65.

In the afternoon I started for Columbia, the track running through perfectly flat forests of pine. The train was late and it was nearly 11 p.m. before I reached the comfortable and charming little Jerome Hotel. Next morning (Christmas Day) was perfectly lovely though cold, and after early church I had a delightful walk over this pretty little town (the capital of South Carolina) which contains many handsome buildings and is beautifully situated on high ground above the Congaree river, its streets shaded by beautiful pines, and delightful villas standing in fine pine groves all along Arsenal Hill, which commands a splendid view of the far-spreading pine-clad valley beneath. The beautiful Sidney Park, stretching along the declivities of the heights, is full of magnificent pines and shrubs, and many rare varieties of fir, and charming green walks and drives, the soil everywhere a deep rich red.

At noon I left by train, through the fine wooded country called Pine-Barrows, gradually rising till at Seneca, where I changed trains, we stood at a height of 900 feet. Here we crossed the river Savannah and entered Georgia. The country becomes more and more beautiful, rising into great hills, clothed to their summits with magnificent pine-woods, intersected with pastoral valleys; till the short day came to an end, and at 7.30, in the darkness, I reached my destination, Mount Airy.

The Mount Airy Hotel overlooks, from a slight elevation, the depot. I got out of the train, and found the manager of the hotel waiting for any possible "guest"—

but what were my feelings when he informed me that the hotel was closed for the winter, with the exception of two or three small rooms left open, in case any commercial traveller should happen to pass !

However, whilst we were talking, the train had gone on, so there I was *plantée*, and nothing to be done but to make the best of it !

The atmosphere in these heights had completely changed, and a bitterly cold wind was blowing—the ground covered with snow. We walked up a flight of wooden steps the few yards to the hotel, an immense building, but all shut up, and I was shown into the only bedroom to be had, on the ground floor.

The wife of the manager was out at a Christmas party, and the few negro helps kept in the winter, likewise merry-making ; and to add to my discomfiture, the manager said he feared there was nothing to eat, everything left from the Christmas dinner having been taken to furnish forth the school feast !

Meantime no fire was possible in my icy-cold bedroom, there being no fireplace ; but the manager kindly offered to light one in the bedroom next door, which could not be used as such, the whole of the window having been broken.

In the tiny dining-parlour (the only “ parlour ” not shut up) there was a stove ; and, after a long time, an egg and some tea were produced, and shortly afterwards the land-lady returned, and was most kind, and insisted on my spending the remainder of the evening in her own warm little room. The night was fearfully cold, and to make matters worse, all my warm things and wraps had been left, as not likely to be required, at New York !

The next morning the pitcher (as jugs are called) contained nothing but ice. All the pitchers and basins in

these parts are of tin, the ice being fatal to china or earthenware.

Any ablutions were impossible ; one could just rub one's hands on the ice by way of washing them, frost-bite being the result—and I felt myself rapidly freezing into an icicle, till a black "lady help" brought me a little warm water.

A hot breakfast was very revivifying, and the sun shone brightly, although an icy wind cut one in two ; so my hosts proposed to take me to the top of an adjacent mountain a little more than 2,000 feet high, from which a grand view would be had.

The snow was quite frozen, so, although slippery, it was not heavy walking, and the dense pine forest, with which the whole of these hills are covered, a little bit checked the icy force of the bitter wind, and their aroma was delightful. The climb was easy and very enjoyable, and the view from a high wooden platform, which we mounted up, at the top of the high hill, quite magnificent—vast ridge upon ridge of pine-clothed hills, and blue billowy valleys, giving so much the impression of a heaving sea that it is called the "Ocean-view," stretching all round, into far-away, shadowy blue distance, bounded by the exquisite branch range of the Alleghany Mountains called Blue Ridge, from its lovely colour.

The wind blew fearfully, and our high wooden belvedere shook and swayed as if every moment it would be blown into space, and we were glad to climb down into the comparative shelter of the pine woods, through which there were charming green walks in every direction.

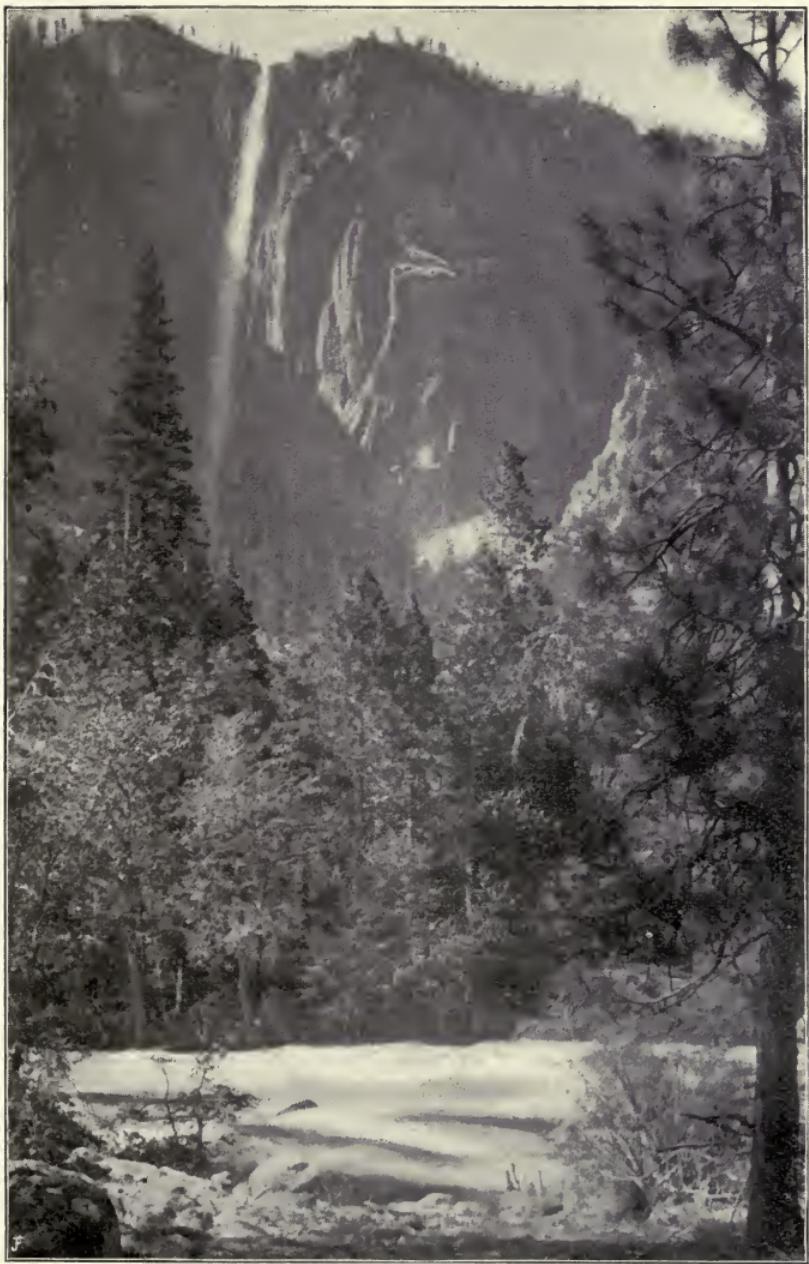
We passed several delightful villas situated on the tops of the rolling hills, surrounded by gardens, all shut up for the winter ; but the climate, although so cold, is considered

most salubrious for consumptives, the fragrant pine woods much contributing.

I had intended going on that evening to Toccoa, having expected some circular notes to arrive that morning; but as no "mail" (as they call "letters") came for me, it was necessary to stay on another day, in this freezingly-cold hotel. However, Mrs. Bacon, my young hostess, was kindness itself, and in addition a very cultivated woman, exceedingly well-read and very accomplished. So the evening passed most pleasantly, rocking on rocking-chairs in her little warm cozy room, talking.

She told me many amusing stories of the negro population, whose vanity and good opinion of themselves are quite extraordinary. They greatly outnumber the whites, and are intelligent to a certain extent; learning readily within limits, and having much ready wit, and many good qualities, as well as bad, and great good humour; but they never seem able to get beyond a certain point, and to remain always mentally in a state of childhood. Negro tramps, to be met with, since the Emancipation, in great numbers here, are held in great terror, and "lynch law" not unfrequently prevails. That night was colder than ever, and next morning all sunshine had disappeared and great flakes of snow were falling from inky clouds, and thick drifts had accumulated during the night—so we had to take refuge in rocking-chairs and talk, round the bright log fire—here nothing but wood is burned, of which there are inexhaustible supplies.

The snow cleared off in the afternoon, fortunately for my hostess, who had a school tea-party, at which I assisted, of white boys and girls—no blacks, of course, the colours being rigidly separated. The children were charming, all so polite and well-behaved, and they sang charmingly



YO SEMITE, "VIRGIN TEARS." P. 93.
3,000 feet from valley.

Christmas carols and glees (Mrs. Bacon accompanying them on her harmonium and piano), and recited, and did gymnastic exercises, and we all told stories, after which they were plentifully regaled with cakes and buns, plum-pudding and tea.

The circular notes arrived that evening, so, after spending some hours in pleasant talk with Mrs. B., I prepared towards midnight to go down to the depot—so conveniently near, escorted by Mr. B. and a handy little negro boy carrying a lantern.

The train soon came in, and at 4 a.m. stopped at Toccoa (Georgia) and I walked the short distance to the delightfully warm and comfortable little "All-the-year-round" Hotel Simpson. But even here, in the bedrooms, the water soon turned to a mass of ice in the tin pitchers, although the negress help, who was also "cook-lady," had instantly lighted a cheerful wood-fire in mine.

CHAPTER XXII.

Toccoa—Tallulah Falls—Toccoa Falls—Biltmore.

DECEMBER 28th: the sun rose in a blue cloudless sky, with the thermometer one degree below zero ; and when, whilst enjoying an excellent Scotch breakfast (my hosts were proud of their Scotch highland descent), I intimated my desire to be furnished with a machine to drive to the famous Tallulah Falls, my kind hostesses and their brother, the Reverend Mr. Simpson, declared that it was quite impossible—the distance was seventeen miles, the ground covered with snow and ice, and I should certainly be frozen *en route*. However, having come so far expressly to see the Tallulah Falls, in addition to the local ones of Toccoa, I insisted, and accordingly a nice little light sort of gig with a very strong and handsome little horse and the most experienced white driver in Toccoa, came to the door at 11, and making the most of my few wraps, we started.

The road passed through very pretty, well-wooded, hilly country, all in the less high portion of the lovely Blue Ridge, and the good little horse trotted along valiantly through the deep but hardened snow ; before long, however, we came to a “creek,” but more resembling a river, flowing with a rapid current across the road—the strong flow in the centre kept it free, but the shallower sides were

thickly coated with slippery ice, which broke under our weight, and when we emerged, again plunging into ice on the further side, it was a relief to find that the poor little horse was not cut or scratched by the sharp jagged edges of the broken ice.

On we went, merrily, but in less than a mile, that creek again crossed the road, this time shallower and nearly all ice. Seven or eight times during the seventeen miles' drive, did we have to face that wretched creek, always more or less deep and frozen, but the good little horse managed so cleverly that he never slipped down and only had one small scratch, rather than cut, when we arrived.

The cold all the way was terrific, and became more and more intense, as towards 3 p.m. we reached Tallulah, and drove straight to the Cliff House, with an attractive exterior, which they had assured me at Toccoa was open the "whole year round." This, unfortunately, turned out to be that which was not; but we were told to go on to the Hotel Robinson, which we did, and found it still more shut up! This was despairing, but the driver said he knew of a very good villa belonging to the doctor, where "guests" were often received. So thither we drove, and were informed by the lady in possession, who, with her daughter rented the house, and with whom the doctor lodged; that everything was in confusion, repairs and additions being *en train*, but that if I did not object to a half-finished room without a fireplace, we could be taken in, horse and all, for the night.

It sounded rather cold, with the thermometer well below zero, but there being nothing else to be done, we alighted, and I was glad to think of the poor little horse lodged in a warm stable.

This villa was charmingly situated on the peak of a

pine-clad hill, overlooking the wooded ravine where rolled the famous Falls.

The landlady gave me a hot cup of coffee, and a guide to conduct me along a winding, zig-zag path down the steep ravine, so slippery with ice like glass, that it was almost impossible to keep one's footing. The cold was something too frightful—feet and hands benumbed and almost frost-bitten.

Nevertheless it was much more than well worth being frozen in coming to see. The vine-clad ravine with its solemn pine trees and dense undergrowth of azalea, which must be exquisite in spring; the magnificent series of falls, some distance from each other—a tremendous body of water plunging, with a thundering sound, over huge and craggy masses of dark precipitous rock, enormous icicles of spiral and strange forms hanging over the dark waters, adding to their beauty. To reach one set of the Falls, one has to creep along a narrow plank pathway for several hundred yards, suspended at a good height along one side of the rushing torrent. This, coated over with frozen snow and slippery ice, was not easy; but with the help of an alpen-stock and the guide, I managed to creep along it without tumbling into the giddy depths of the thundering falls below.

It was grand—the roaring, rushing, foaming torrents of angry water. The splendid ilexes and great pines, the glittering icicles, all lighted by a vividly radiant, orange-red sunset!

But, having to creep up the steep paths all the way back, on account of the slippery ice (oh for an alpine ice-axe!), the cold was something too bitter, and I re-entered the villa simply an automaton of ice!

There was a good, big wood-fire in the parlour, but the

draughts were something frightful, the greater part of the house being in the hands of the carpenters. Into one of the new rooms I was shown, up a snowy staircase still open to the sky, my windows only partly glazed. Even hot water almost instantly turned to ice! At supper, which was soon ready, the doctor and a lodger, an old colonel who had been eleven years American consul in Holland, appeared. Both had travelled nearly all over the world; and after supper, sitting round a big pine-log fire, the evening passed pleasantly, talking.

With the uninviting prospect upstairs, I took care not to let the conversation flag, so as to spend as much of the night as possible near a fire; but when 1 a.m. struck, it was impossible to resist the invitation of the hostess to go up aloft, and up I had to go—the frightful cold of that night no words can describe! but it passed, as all things will, and as soon as it was light I scrambled down the half-finished staircase, on which fresh snow had fallen, to the kitchen, where there was already a fire, and tried to thaw. I must add that my hostess had most kindly done her utmost to make my room comfortable, and it was not her fault that an unbidden guest had arrived whilst the house was still *en l'air!*

Soon some hot coffee was ready, and, quite revived, I walked down again to the splendid Falls, by a brilliant sunrise. In summer and spring they must be perfectly lovely, the banks one mass of azaleas of every hue, but mostly of that deliciously sweet variety known as the yellow "honeysuckle." The Falls are entirely distinct, and six in number—one more grand and beautiful than another.

The sky was radiantly blue, and the hoar frost, on every tree and shrub, sparkled like diamond dust in the brilliant

sunrays, and the great icicles shone, and the waters foamed and roared, and the wonderful beauty of it all far more than made up for the extremity of cold.

At 10 a.m. we started on the return journey, the little horse like a giant refreshed dragged us rapidly along, through all the frozen windings of the horrid creek and the ice-sheeted road, till, about four miles before the end of the journey, we made a slight *détour*, to see the Toccoa Falls from above. I had to leave the road and walk a short distance, under grand pines, on a snowy and icy pathway along the here almost flat banks of the Toccoa river, its exquisitely clear and partly ice-sheeted water gliding calmly and peacefully along, breaking into musical little bubbling waves over the moss-grown icy boulders, with no hurry or fuss, till it reaches the sheer vertical precipice of 185 feet, over which there is nothing for it but to precipitate itself—but with the most deliberately gentle and graceful of leaps, on to a dazzling bed of snowy icicles below.

Above the steep precipice towered huge pines, their bright velvety green foliage besprinkled with frozen snow—sparkling wreaths of diamonds and rubies too lovely for words !

But on we had to go, reaching the little town of Toccoa at 2 in the afternoon, in good time for a cup of tea, my hosts surprised to see me alive, and still more astonished when I announced my intention of immediately starting off again to see the Toccoa Falls from below.

After some remonstrance they allowed me to have a fresh horse and driver, a negro this time—my American driver having had quite enough of it, as well as the poor dear good little horse. This time my horse was a huge black one. Four miles of hilly woodland, through several more

frozen creeks, in which the big horse, less clever than the little one, managed to scratch and cut himself (not seriously, happily) till the road ends, and I got out to walk, or rather scramble, along a path over great boulders covered with green-gold lichens and moss, the ground one sheet of snow-ice, shadowed by solemn ilexes and pines, skirting the river, till I reached a quite open space with semicircular background of vertical cliffs, 185 feet high, pine-crowned, glistening with huge, pendent, fantastic icicles—the Falls in the centre gracefully floating rather than falling in loveliest fairy-like clouds and wreaths of misty foam down the shining ice-wall on to a dazzling snow-heap of frosted silver: then winding their way into deep emerald-green whirling pools hemmed round by green-gold velvety rocks ice-bound—the whole glittering magical scene lighted into a glory of radiance by the scarlet and gold of sunset!

The cold was intense, and at last, rapidly turning into a pillar of ice, I tore myself away, and we drove back to the Hotel Simpson, where I spent a very pleasant evening in the warm little cosy parlour with my kind and agreeable hosts, who were glad to hear news of the "old country," and in return told me many most interesting stories and episodes of the terrible civil war, from the ruin of which these once rich and beautiful Southern states are only beginning to recover—many of the best families irretrievably ruined.

As to the Slavery question, the general opinion in the South seems to be that the Federal Government was entirely in the right to abolish an institution open to such great abuse; but what appears to rankle indelibly is that, before "going in for Abolition," the slave-holding states of the North—so say the Southerners—instead of freeing their slaves, got rid of them by selling them to the highest

bidders; after which they were quite ready to declare for "Negro freedom," "without compensation!"

Next morning (December 30th) I started early for one more view of the infinite loveliness of the Toccoa Falls.

Fresh rime covered the deep greenery of the great pines and ilexes, and a fresh powdering of frozen snow had draped them with a delicate fretwork of ice-flowers, sparkling in the brilliant sunshine; and the lovely falls fell, shining and snowy and graceful as ever, to their glittering ice-bed of frozen driven snow, into the emerald-green pools of the half-frozen river beyond.

At last it was time to hurry back to the Hotel Simpson, where, after an excellent refection, I took leave of my amiable hosts, and hurried to the depot only just in time for the 12.30 train to Spartanburg, where I changed lines, and proceeded straight north into the heart of the beautiful Blue Ridge—the loveliest of the Alleghanies.

We had now reached the high plateau of western North Carolina, bounded on one side by the Great Smoky Mountains, and to the east by the Blue Ridge, intersected by lovely valleys formed by the numerous spurs of both ranges.

We sped on through a magnificent panorama of craggy rocks, splendid pines, foaming torrents, and broad rivers nearly ice-bound, till a dazzling crimson sunset was followed by darkness; and at 7 p.m. the tolling of the locomotive's bell announced its arrival at Biltmore, the end of my day's journey, where a smart 'bus was waiting to convey "guests" to the Kenilworth Inn; and in a few minutes we were plunging through the icy snow, and crossing a handsome bridge over a frozen river into the lovely park and extensive grounds of the inn.

The road winds steeply up the high and beautifully-

wooded hill on which stands—commanding a magnificent panorama of snow-clad mountains—the exteriorly-picturesque, as well as interiorly charming and delightfully comfortable Kenilworth Inn.

The inn stands alone, like a grand country house, in its lovely grounds and park, two miles from Asheville, the nearest town.

After my late “arctic” experiences, it was real joy to find myself once more in a warm and luxuriously-furnished bedroom, with bath and the electric light, and where water did not instantly congeal into ice!

From my windows I could see a distant chain of lonely, desolate, snow-clad mountains, cold, white, and wintry, their snow-peaks shining like ice-phantoms in the pale light of the moon, their sides one silvery sheet of frozen snow.

It was nice to go down to the comfortable dining-room, where an excellent supper awaited, and then to the beautiful warm parlours, where classical music was being admirably played by a German orchestra.

How egoistical all this sounds! But how can one help liking to be comfortable?

CHAPTER XXIII.

Biltmore, North Carolina—Biltmore House—Asheville—Hot Springs—Mount Rich—Roanoke.

THE weather next morning was heavenly! Brilliant sunlight shining on the radiant snowfields of those distant hills, and the whole grand expanse of hill and dale shrouded in snow.

I began a sketch from my windows, and after a twelve o'clock *déjeuner*, went in a charming little victoria with two pretty ponies, driven by a magnificent negro, for an enchanting drive to see the "great sight" of the neighbourhood, Biltmore House.

The ponies trotted merrily down the steep and slippery zig-zag road, through the fragrant pine wood to the nearly ice-bound river below, across the bridge, making straight for the snowy spectres of my last night's view—their desolate snowfields sparkling and glittering in the sunlight, the cold intense, but most exhilarating! The road more and more icy and slippery as we rose into the snowy hearts of the hills, passing lovely sheltered hollows and plantations of every variety of rare and beautiful fir and pine. For miles through the admirably-kept estate of Biltmore, which looks like one vast pleasure-ground—a picturesque occasional cottage and trim little garden.

At last the mountains opened into a vast expanse of smiling valley bathed in sunshine, itself exquisitely undu-

lating, and we reached the extraordinarily grand and beautiful site on which Mr. George Vanderbilt has built his magnificent country house.

It is a site perfect and unique in its delicate and infinitely poetic beauty. The entire environings—especially as seen from the point of view of a graceful white marble kiosk at the further extremity of the beautiful green lawn adjoining the chateau—indescribably lovely and superbly stately.

It is a place where only old-world minuets should be danced and poetry spoken! No profane noises should be allowed to mar the infinite sense of sublime, reposeful peace, and dreamy, poetic harmony!

You see before you a sunshiny arcadian valley, serene and smiling, of grand and majestic width and limitless length; its far western horizon guarded by endless blue lovely chains of hills and snow-crowned peaks, stretching from far south to north, as far as eye can reach, into dimmest distance, melting and vanishing into misty, vapoury, vague mystery that might be sunlit sea or sky.

Eastward rise beautifully wooded hills, and in the far north, snowy peaks of the Great Smoky Mountains, the sun-bathed valley restfully shining between in the golden light.

The house itself is an immense and handsome castellated palace. Its west front stands sheer up on the very edge of a high, bold, rocky bluff, rising perpendicularly, with very fine effect, from the green vale. On the entrance side, facing east, a wide terrace stretches to the foot of a high, white marble wall and sculptured balustrade, in front of which a triple fountain plays out of exquisitely carved white marble basins, on each side of which grand flights of wide white marble steps ascend to a beautiful terraced

Italian garden, beyond which a gentle acclivity of exquisitely green turf, worthy of England, leads to the wooded heights above.

The vista from this terrace, of chateau, valley, and distant hills, is superb, but the loveliest point of view is the one I have already described.

A carriage-drive, of course, leads to the grand entrance, and, must I add ? a railroad ! Of course, in America, to be quite "up to date," a millionaire must have his private railroad driving up to his door ; but might it not be the *back-door*, not the front ?

There, in full view of the house, in close proximity to it, stood the huge and, no doubt, as far as possible, ornamented, but, necessarily, not ornamental, private railway-car of the proprietor ! Very handy, no doubt ; but a little destructive of the delicate poetry of this most infinitely poetic place.

I should have placed it well out of sight, which could have been so easily done, close by.

There are endless tempting walks on the beautifully wooded hills, and I flew from point to point to see as much as possible, and back to the lawn, and down more white marble flights, to secluded white marble cloisters and lovely gardens and shrubberies admirably and most tastefully laid out by an English landscape-gardener ; immense masses of azaleas which, in spring, must be one blaze of colour ; down a series of green terraces and grand flights of steps to a charming kitchen garden, and huge conservatories and hothouses, endless lovely walks and drives, and lakes and fountains : in short, a fairy dream of enchantment ! and when finished, will be the most perfectly complete and charming thing of its kind imaginable.

Inexorable Time pressed, and I hastened back to the



THE THREE BROTHERS—YO SEMITE. P. 93.

4,000 feet from valley.

house, still unfinished, and full of scaffolding and workmen. The overseer (for whom I had an order) kindly showed me as much of it as was possible. Its centre is occupied by a magnificent winter garden roofed with glass, communicating with fine suites of apartments, including an immense ball-room, and giant circular staircase of white marble.

But, far beyond and above all that is here made "by hands," is the incomparable beauty and grandeur of the natural site!

The sky was all red and gold in the west, and the sun not far from setting, so it became necessary to take leave of this most fascinating and indescribably beautiful spot; and my half-frozen ponies were glad to trot rapidly away, by another route, through the lovely grounds and parks, planted with rarest and choicest trees and shrubs; by the terraced banks of the Swannanoa river, calmly gliding along under a thick coating of ice; coming, round a wooded curve suddenly upon a splendid view of the castle, rising boldly above the huge rocky bluff; through more woods, past an immense dairy establishment for supplying the house, a huge building raised on piles, which accommodates, the driver said, 100 cows during the winter, with every sort of dairy convenience, and lodging for the attendants.

One or two "model cottages" we passed, and finally, as darkness was setting in, reached the main railroad with which Mr. Vanderbilt's private track is connected, and then, skirting the French Broad river, crossed it over the bridge at the depot, and so back to Kenilworth Inn, quite frostbitten and frozen—a trifling penalty for so enchanting an expedition!

Next day the cold waxed still more intense, but the sun shone brilliantly, and I sketched (from the house—im-

possible to have done so out of doors) and then went for a long, icily-cold, but beautiful ramble up into the hills; and in the evening had the great pleasure of making acquaintance with Miss A'Becket, one of the finest landscape-painters in America, who kindly invited me to look at her beautiful paintings (of which she had an immense collection) in the delightful "Sun-parlour" which she permanently retains as "studio." She has studios also at New York and other cities. She had studied in France under Daubigny (the only pupil he ever consented to have) in the ideas and traditions of the Barbazon school, of which her style, although very original, presents many of the characteristics, especially those of Diaz, whose grand forest scenes and sky-effects hers greatly resemble. Many of her best works are in private collections in New York and Boston, and other U.S. cities.

I spent two delightful hours next morning in her "Sun-parlour"—a large circular room almost entirely of glass, so bright and sunny that no fire was needed—and in the afternoon walked over the hills through charming woods to Asheville, a nice town, with plenty of good shops, and one enormous, grand hotel, "Battery Park," splendidly situated on a hill above, and slightly outside, the town, commanding glorious views of the Great Smoky Mountains and the Blue Ridge, and Mounts Mitchell and Pisgah, both 6,000 feet high, with lovely valleys between.

On the whole, this view is grander and more striking than that from the "Kenilworth;" but the inn I consider infinitely preferable in point of internal arrangements and privacy, away from towns, and with all the advantage of a "country house," in the centre of enchanting walks and drives.

The Battery Park, too, is full of consumptives—the

high and dry situation and bright skies and sunshine being, in spite of the extreme cold, very curative of that malady—so prevalent in America, favoured, no doubt, by the unwholesome and excessive steam, as well as fire, heat kept up in every house, hotel, and train.

I walked back in the freezing twilight and ice-cold bitter wind, and was only too glad of the, perhaps, “unwholesome” warmth of the Inn ; the evening pleasantly diversified by music and art talk with my new friend, Miss A’Becket.

Next morning (January 2nd) was again perfectly lovely, and immediately after breakfast Miss A’Becket came with me for a drive in the nice little victoria. She, of course, knew the country by heart, and directed the driver to the loveliest points of view, round the Sunset Drive, the scenery of which is exquisitely beautiful.

The steep roads were rather dangerously slippery, snow everywhere and sheets of ice in places ; but the little ponies trotted along quite nimbly, and the glorious sunshine and exhilarating air and enchanting views made the whole drive a perfect delight.

It was sad to have to leave this most charming country ; but it was time to continue my pilgrimage ; and with great regret I took leave of lovely Biltmore, and of my kind friend Miss A’Becket, who amiably accompanied me to the station, and waited till my train started at 4 p.m. for Hot Springs, North Carolina.

The whole way was lovely, through wooded ravines skirting the rocky bed of the wide French Broad. Such a pity not to have left it its poetical Indian name of “Minnehaha” (Laughing Water).

The Indians were very fond of this expressive name, and gave it to many of their rivers and waterfalls.

At 6 p.m. the train stopped at the depot in the lovely little valley of Hot Springs, encompassed by mountains, and through which the French Broad majestically flows, reinforced by many mountain torrents and brooks.

I left the train, and crossing a wide bridge, over a tributary which here joins the Minnehaha, walked the short distance, all within its grounds, to the delightful Mountain Park Hotel.

I was given a charming room up in a high tower with wide windows opening on to a balcony with lovely views. This hotel is the perfection of comfort, cuisine all that can be wished, and possessed of a splendid establishment of hot sulphur baths; but the attraction of all others, to my mind, is that it stands within, literally, five minutes of climbs up into the loveliest mountains, where paths and walks in every direction take you into the most exquisite scenery, through pine forests of a wonderful fragrance, reminding me of the exquisite pine woods of Tatoi, in Greece.

My first morning (January 4th) was brilliantly lovely and so very much milder, that it was possible to think of sketching. So after breakfast, at seven, I sallied forth armed with sketch-book and alpenstock, to explore the delicious pine-clad heights. Three minutes take one to the fine wide bridge over the French Broad, two or three minutes more, along a carriage road skirting the banks, to a road leading straight up the hill. I followed this yellowish-red sandy road through masses of splendid rhododendrons and azaleas under grand pines of the vividest velvety green, crossing a babbling mountain-stream which comes tumbling in pretty cascades over rocks covered with velvety golden moss; steadily ascending, and winding two or three times round the circular mountain called Round

Top, clothed with pines and rhododendrons to its very summit ; deep ravines around, and steep mountains rising on every side covered with glorious pines ; the different points of view, as one went along, all one more lovely than another !

From the summit a superb view of the green valley of Hot Springs below, mountains of the bluest blue rising range upon range beyond, and the beautiful shining river curving and flowing through the bright green sunny meadows ; for here there was no snow, all was green and summery, and the arctic weather and snows of yesterday, at a distance of only thirty miles, seemed like a dream.

I chose at last a lovely spot for a sketch, and sat there happily painting, basking in delicious sunshine, the air almost heavy with aromatic pine-fragrance, till late in the afternoon, and then returned by the sinuous curves of a sandy path, in time to have a delightful hot sulphur bath in the great bath house, one minute's walk from the hotel.

Each bath is about 10 to 12 feet square, usually from 5 to 6 deep, the water steaming with natural heat, slightly opaque, of the usual, turquoise greeny colour.

You can, if you please, and of course invalids do, consult the doctor resident in the hotel, a young German who divides his year between Carlsbad in the summer and Hot Springs in the winter, before drinking the waters and taking the baths ; but for mere pleasure baths this would have been quite a work of supererogation.

Next day the weather was still more perfect and summery, so I started immediately after 7 o'clock breakfast, provided with biscuits and sketch-book to make, with the help of a map, the ascent of the great Mount Rich, 7,000 feet high, in the same direction but far beyond the Round Top.

Anything more enchantingly lovely could not be imagined! the heavenly weather, the delicious pine-fragrance, the exquisite mountain views, as I rose higher and higher, and wound by a green mossy pathway up the hills, stopping once or twice to make hurried sketches of irresistibly lovely points, till I reached a wide bridle-path leading in two directions, and took the wrong one, which led into Tennessee.

It was alluring; the views into the green valleys of Tennessee quite lovely, but at last I found by certain landmarks on consulting the map, that it was taking me away from Mount Rich, so, to save time, left the road and climbed what I imagined would be a short cut to my destination.

Like the proverbial "short cut" it turned out to be the "longest way round," and most arduous climbing, with the fear of coming upon rattlesnakes—the weather having been all the winter quite warm enough here to keep them awake.

When I reached the top of a high hill, there was a deep ravine to descend and climb up the opposite side, and so *ad infinitum*—till at last I had the joy of standing on the very summit of the beautiful Mount Rich, from which the panorama is perfectly glorious! You look over seven States, ridge upon ridge of endless ranges of the loveliest blue, here and there snow-clad. Towards Tennessee and Kentucky the mountains shelving down, pine-clad, into green valleys stretching mistily away into dim horizon—the most wonderful lights and shades and blue vapoury mists—a sky surpassing that of Italy, and a glory of sunshine, touching the rich green of the pines with gold, and the distant snowfields with a lovely unearthly radiance!

Mount Rich itself is clothed with pines and deciduous

trees to its very highest point, the ground covered with deep mossy turf; but wide spaces have been cleared to admit of uninterrupted vistas.

I hurriedly tried to gather into my sketch-book some faint reminiscence of this incomparable panorama; and then, alas, it was time to descend.

This time I followed a tolerably distinct sort of sheep-walk, which led to the most gloriously beautiful pine grove I have ever seen or could imagine! Hundreds of luxuriant pines of the most exquisitely beautiful form and foliage, grouped, by nature, in graceful masses that no art could equal, on golden mossy undulating turf, the pyramidal background of Mount Rich rising boldly into the blue sky.

The path led winding through the loveliest groups of this indescribably beautiful pine-garden, and then opened to fields and a cottage, in front of which a boy with a shepherd's crook superintended an immense herd of very small black pigs.

This I knew from the map to be the terminus of the bridle-road from Hot Springs, and accordingly found it close by, and followed it down a steep declivity, so thickly wooded that Mount Rich was soon lost to view; a steep "gulch" to the left, down which roared a torrent at the foot of a mountain rising steeply beyond, cleared here and there, always in its steepest parts, for tobacco plantations.

The tobacco of these hills is looked upon as excessively choice, and is the most lucrative produce of this district—the steeper the hill-side the better it grows.

The wide bridle-path was now all plain sailing, but as a creek had chosen it for its bed, and meandered backwards and forwards upon it, it was very wet walking, and so deep occasionally that one had to bound from stone to stone to

avoid wading knee-deep. As the path advanced the trees opened out to a series of the most heavenly views—an artist's Paradise ! and always the delicious perfume of the pines and the glory of the setting sun !

I reached the hotel just before dark in time for a visit to the sulphur bath before supper.

Some ladies, and a young couple from Boston who occupied the same table with me, were all mightily impressed by my long climb, which they looked upon as an unheard-of feat—most Americans being much too lazy to walk, in fact considering it a waste of energy, especially up hill—and assured me they would all go up, on donkeys, the first fine day.

The following morning was again warm and summery, and I spent a delightful day wandering among the pine-clad mountains on the opposite side of the valley. But the Round Top side is the lovelier by far.

I began to think I should never be able to tear myself away from all this enchantment !

But, alas, the next day (January 9th) a change had come over the "spirit of its dream," the hill-tops were wreathed in cloud and a fine rain was pouring down.

There was nothing for it but to take refuge in the steaming sulphur baths; the rain turned to torrents, and then to snow, and finally, towards 3 p.m., cleared sufficiently to make possible a scrambling walk, in deep snow, to the beautiful Spring Creek Falls; very difficult to reach, the "creek" having turned to a raging torrent, and so deeply overflowed its rocky banks that it was often necessary to scramble some way up, over crags and trees, to avoid being drowned.

The temperature had rapidly fallen, and next morning hills, valleys, and all were one sheet of sparkling snow ! a

sharp frost, and the air bitterly cold in spite of a brilliant sun ; but it all looked so exquisitely beautiful, with the bluest of skies above, that I decided to go up the hills, if possible to the top of Mount Rich, to compare the snow effects with the previous summery ones.

But just as I had crossed the bridge, heavy clouds rolled up and thick flakes of snow soon blotted out the surroundings, so back I had to go to the usual refuge of the sulphur baths.

But this time, for some reason which nobody seemed to understand, the flooded state of the river had caused the water to rise in the baths to a depth of 7 or 8 feet, and looked rather alarming ! However, it was not impossible, there being ropes to hold on by, and a narrow stone staircase for descending into the bath.

The snow storm continued, and I began to think of departing, but it cleared in the afternoon, and I tried to get as far as the famous Paint Rock along the beautiful road skirting and partly overhanging the swollen river ; after two or three miles, however, arriving at a curve where the whole road was deeply submerged, and banked by high perpendicular rock, so had to turn back.

Next morning, however (January 11th), the sun was once more visible in cloudless blue sky, the snow all frozen hard ; so directly after early breakfast I started, duly provided with "crackers," as they call biscuits, in hopes of being able, with the help of my strong alpenstock, to get to the top of Mount Rich.

The whole landscape was dazzlingly white, the trees and shrubs covered with the loveliest minute icicles and snow-flowers, and although the road, in places, was deep in frozen snow, melting where the sun reached it, and the zig-zag path of the creek over the bridle-road was mostly

coated with ice, there was no particular difficulty till I reached the cottage where the pigs herded.

There the bridle-road ends, and the rough path begins.

As I emerged from the thick, dark shade of the wood into this open space, the steep, upright cone of Mount Rich suddenly came into sight, the most absolutely glorious and fairy-like scene I ever beheld !

The mountain seemed, as it were, transfigured into a radiant glory simply divine. Shining frozen snow, like burnished silver, covered the ground—my beautiful pine grove, as well as the whole of the graceful leafless trees reaching to the highest summit, all one shining, dazzling fretwork of frosted snow, delicate icicles, ropes and wreaths of fairy diamonds, emeralds, rubies.

The incredible, unearthly shine and radiance of it all ! the deep blue of the cloudless sky, contrasted into a kind of burnished ultramarine-indigo, a sight to hold one spell-bound, wrapt in speechless ecstasy, a dream divine of joy and beauty—indeed, a “joy for ever !”

Nothing could surpass this sight divine ! but, after a time, I longed to see it all from the top, so, excelsior ! all trace of the path obliterated by snow. Still, I could guess pretty well, the general direction, at any rate.

The snow was deep, the frozen surface sometimes bearing and sometimes letting one down, sharp ice cutting one's boots ; on the steeper and rockier parts sheets of slippery ice, on which it was impossible to obtain a footing, though I tried to make the sharp point of the alpen-stock do duty for an ice-axe ; and where the snow looked safe, one suddenly felt it slipping and rapidly carrying one down with it over the slippery ice beneath. Then, in the heat of the sun-rays, the lovely fretwork of frozen snow and icicles constantly melting, dripped in streams of

water or fell in sharp masses with great thumps on one's head.

In short, it was not easy, but infinitely well worth incomparably greater labour to see the sight that I saw at the top.

It is no use to attempt to describe the indescribable, and at last I tore myself from that unutterable presentment of divine glory and beauty, and clambered down again, and reached the cottage, where I found the pigs assembled in force—a quite alarming black regiment—which, probably put out by the difficulty of finding food under the snow-wreaths, seemed inclined to show fight when I meekly endeavoured to find a path through their serried phalanx.

Luckily, the herd-boy was not far off, or I think I should have had to make a *détour*; for creatures whose favourite food is the rattlesnake are not to be faced without thinking twice.

The rest of the way on the bridle-path and road was only slippery and sloshy where the sun's rays shone; so, stopping occasionally to take mental photographs of the wondrous views in their shining garb of silver, I reached the hotel just as the last scarlet rays of sunset were paling to rose-pink on the white surrounding world, and once more proceeded to the sulphur baths, which had now reached a depth of about 12 feet.

At supper my Bostonian friends seemed quite awestruck when they had heard where I had been, and quite *enthousiasmé* when I described the snow marvels, but I don't think they ever went!

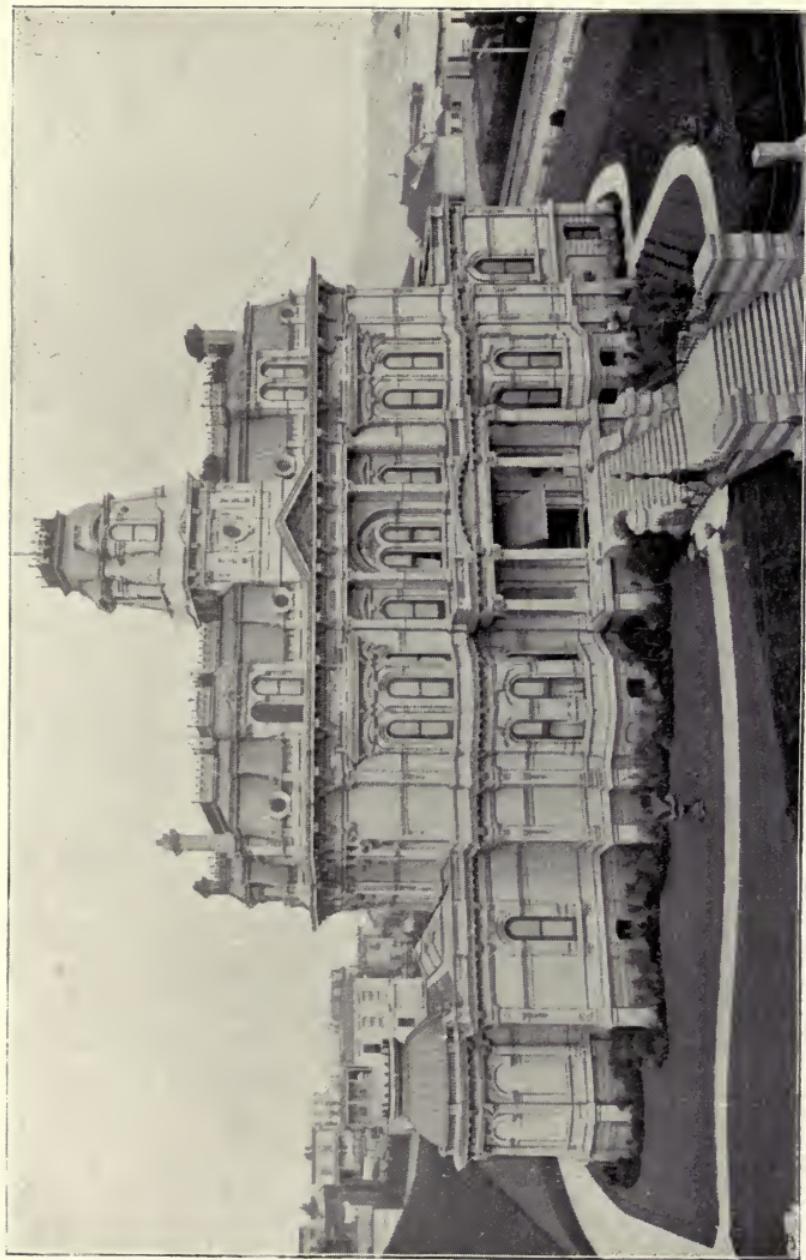
January 12th. Four degrees below zero, a pelting snow-storm. The water had now risen so high at the baths that the whole building was overflowed—still rising rapidly

—so the whole thing had to be shut up, and, for all I know, may have been bodily carried away, as the river rose all day, and in the afternoon the snowstorm was still raging.

It was, perhaps, as well for me that my last pair of boots had come to the last stage of grief, and that the sweet little village of Hot Springs contained no boot or "rubber" shops, or I might have been there still. It is one of those fascinating haunts that one could linger at for ever.

But now it was good-bye; and at 4 p.m., escorted by the German doctor—who had been singing charmingly in the great ball-room songs of Wagner and Schumann all the morning, accompanied on the grand piano by the Bostonian ladies—and the huge negro porter groaning and staggering under the weight of my light little "grip-sacks" (as the Americans call travelling bags), I waded through the heavy snowstorm the very little distance across the garden to the depot, where the train shortly arrived, and conveyed me to Morris Town, reached at 7 p.m., where I had the pleasure of waiting in the draughtiest and iciest of waiting rooms, the thermometer having dropped to 12 degrees below zero, till a branch-train came in at 11.45 p.m. and further conveyed me in a suffocating "sleeper" which was taken off at ten next morning, all changing into an ordinary car, to Roanoke, where, for some occult reason, the "connecting" locomotive did not put in an appearance till two and a half hours after its time. Consequently it was too late to go on to Natural Bridge; so, instead, I walked up 200 or 300 yards to the imposing and most comfortable Roanoke Hotel, my heavy baggage having been "checked" straight to Washington.

An excellent luncheon was *en train* of being eaten in a



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fine dining-parlour, and after it was over the amiable landlady, Mrs. Campbell, offered to show me the principal Roanoke lions.

It was a brilliantly sunshiny day, but with the thermometer at 12 degrees below zero, and the ground one white sheet of snow and ice, and no boots to speak of to wear, a walk which otherwise would have been delightful, in fine hilly scenery, became a more than doubtful pleasure; and the day being, unfortunately, Sunday, it was tantalizing to pass two or three huge "boot and rubber stores," not able to enter in.

The town stands high, skirted by the fine Roanoke river and the Blue Ridge Mountains, which just here rise in somewhat mound-like shape, grassy and green (where not covered with snow) but destitute of trees. The views are grand and expansive, and there are curious fountains and springs of unknown depth, one of which, high up in the hills, Mrs. Campbell was anxious I should see; and I should have liked it too, but after wading knee-deep for more than an hour in half-frozen snow, in the bitterest of cutting winds, hands and feet literally turned to ice, my curiosity and courage failed, and I begged to return to the warm comforts of the hotel, where we arrived just as the snow-hills turned scarlet at sunset.

Next morning, which was beautifully sunshiny but equally freezing, my one longing was to fly to the boot-store for new boots and "arctics" (snow-boots). I found an excellent pair of strong triple-soled boots, not remarkable for elegance, although purporting to be "Parisian;" but, alas! no "arctics." "Rubbers" (*i.e.*, goloshes) were to be had in plenty, so I invested in a pair, which stood me in good stead during the icy remainder of my peregrinations.

CHAPTER XXIV.

The Natural Bridge of Virginia—Luray—Caverns of Luray—Shenandoah Valley.

AT 11 a.m. my train started for Natural Bridge, through the charming scenery of the valley of Virginia, watered by several fine rivers, arriving at noon at the neat little depot, one sheet of ice—my new “rubbers” quite invaluable on the slippery ground.

A sort of pony-carriage with a strong, impatient pony, with difficulty held in check by an important-looking black coachman, was waiting to take me to the Pavilion Hotel, Natural Bridge, about three miles distant.

In the lovely brilliant sunshine and radiant blue sky, one almost forgot the intensity of the frost—here 13 degrees below zero! and the pony merrily trotted, jangling his bells, through the deep snow, and plunged, as if he liked it, into a wide frozen creek, the ice bearing at first, then breaking under our weight, into deep water. We soon scrambled out, our valiant pony breaking into a gallop, and in less than half an hour reached the summit of a small plateau fringed with fine and choice trees, on which stood the two or three hotels, and one beautiful villa surrounded by gardens, which constitute the “town” of Natural Bridge.

In every direction, lovely views of the distant peaks and

domes of the Blue Ridge and richly-fertile, wooded valleys—but where was the Natural Bridge? No trace or indication of it could be seen, although I had been told to look for it within two minutes' walk of the hotel! I deposited my things and had a cup of tea at the Pavilion, where, in answer to my anxious inquiries, I was assured that the Bridge was there; I should find it close by, and had only to follow the road.

So I set out to find it.

I "followed the road" up a broad wooded slope, no bridge anywhere!

On and on, through deep snow, wondering at the native idea of "close by"—along the road, till, at last, I met a man on horseback and inquired for the bridge. He said, "Oh my! you've gone miles out of your way! Turn back till you see a little house with a wide gate, through which you must go, and follow the path."

So back I turned, till, after a long time, I saw the objects described, and entered into a sort of snowy park, trying to find the "path" in the deep snow. There seemed to be some sort of track, and frozen footsteps here and there; so I followed on to a wide steep expanse, with the beautiful Blue Ridge beyond—all one sheet of dazzling snow, looking like burnished silver where the snow had melted into sheets of pure ice.

I concluded that the "bridge" must be under the further side of this steep acclivity, and proceeded to climb up it, as best I could, over the frozen snow, which often gave way and dropped me into a depth of one or two feet.

With the greatest difficulty I reached, at last, the steep and absolutely glassy summit, on which stood an observatory, up which I climbed, not easily, for the whole of the steps and all were entirely covered with transparent ice, on

which only my trusty "rubbers" enabled me to keep any kind of footing.

No "bridge" anywhere!

But a view indescribably beautiful! A panorama of magnificent mountain ranges, all one unbroken sheet of radiant frozen snow, rose-scarlet in the marvellous red light of the nearly setting sun!

In the intense and bitter cold I had been gradually turning into an icicle, and was almost too benumbed to get safely down the slippery steps, and retrace my way on the glassy surface of the hill; and this time, was not provided with my trusty alpenstock—only an umbrella.

However, somehow or other, with immense difficulty, sliding and stumbling, I at last reached the gate which had beguiled me—much to my advantage, for otherwise I might never have seen the glorious "sunset view" from Mount Jefferson, as I afterwards discovered its name to be.

Now all was plain sailing and I followed the road homeward, shadowed by magnificent trees, till just as I reached the height above the little plateau, I met a lady, with the loveliest pale-gold hair, walking with a little boy, and begged her to tell me *where* this famous bridge could possibly be? She said, "Oh, just right away here," and kindly turned back to a gate close by, through which she conducted me, along an almost impossible path, knee-deep in snow, tumbling over rocks slippery with ice, to a ridge protected by an iron rail overhanging a stony perpendicular precipice 300 feet deep—and lo! there just across to the left, was the wonderful Natural Bridge, over-arching the rocky ravine, in the depths of which flowed the half ice-bound Cedar Creek.

A stupendously grand and impressive sight! these huge

vertical walls of rock, held together and bridged over by a gigantic monolith of horizontal limestone 90 feet in span, 40 feet deep, and 100 feet wide, slightly slanting, and crowned by the loveliest fringe of graceful trees !

The highway passes over this huge monolithic arch, and no wonder that I had actually crossed over it without knowing it, for the wide road is thickly bordered by trees which shut out all suspicion of the marvel beneath.

The rock from which we looked, and which is remarkable for a natural seat and table, is called the Pulpit Rock, a site, indeed, sublime for a " Sermon in Stones ! " The whole included in the lovely private grounds of the villa belonging to the widow of Colonel Parsons, who, some months previously, had been shot by a railway conductor to whose conduct he had taken exception.

These shrubberies are beautifully planted with grand catalpa and tulip trees, the ubiquitous magnolia, and lovely virginian cedars. The charming villa stands in the midst, with a lofty campanile and observatory, and wide verandas and balconies half hidden in creepers and flowering shrubs. It was now closed—Mrs. Parsons and her daughters preferring to spend the cold winter months in apartments in the Pavilion.

My kind guide next showed me the way to a small lodge on the opposite edge of the plateau, through which one had to pass *en route* to the ravine under the bridge ; and beyond which, a steep declivity led, by a flight of rustic steps, skirting the edge of a wide and shallow creek, tumbling in sparkling, half-frozen cascades down an interminable series of wide and shallow natural steps in the rocky descent, covered with ice and icicles, and overshadowed by magnificent arbor-vitæ trees, of untold age.

When I had accomplished the descent—difficult on the

slippery ice, the snowy path took a sharp turn to the right, following the course of the beautiful Cedar Creek, so named because of the grand and stately virginian cedars which cover the high steep banks of the ravine.

Stumbling in the deep frozen snow coming round the bend, suddenly I found myself face to face with this indescribably astounding and wonderful work of nature, in all the intense impressiveness of its superb and magnificent grandeur !

It is a sight the wonder of which grows and grows as you look ! The ponderous, massive, red-gray rocky giant walls, held joined on high by that mighty yet most graceful span, overhanging the tremendous tunnel, " not made by hands," through the towering cliff.

The green waters of the creek flowed calmly on, half veiled in ice, round and about the craggy boulders moss-grown with yellow lichen ; and the rocky narrow path, one sheet of ice, hugging the vertical right-hand wall, led through the ice-girded bridge to where, beyond it, under the Pulpit Rock, you look back on its stupendous form, and the cedar-crowned ravine beyond.

It would be impossible to imagine anything more magnificently grand than this portentous and wondrous monument of the gradual and insidious, disintegrating power and might, in long course of ages, of a stream of water !

Twilight was rapidly turning to gloom and darkness, deepening and enhancing the overwhelming grandeur of the giant bridge ; and in the deep snow, and icy slipperiness, I struggled back to the hotel ; where, soon after, I sat down to supper, in company with three or four ladies, one of whom turned out to be my kind guide with the exquisite pale-gold hair. We soon renewed acquaintance, and I found that she was the eldest, lately married, daughter

of Mrs. Parsons ; she gave me the kindest invitation to sit afterwards in her mother's comfortable parlour, which was a great boon, and I spent the evening in pleasant talk with her and her sisters, and a Philadelphian lady, the mother of the little boy I had met with her, and who, although only five years old, seemed to be, like most American children, " quite the master," and phenomenally precocious.

My bedroom was freezingly cold, but a fine, turbanned negress brought me a good supply of pine-logs, and smilingly made up the fire.

Next morning (January 15th) dark heavy clouds, already falling in thick snow over the mountains, seemed to threaten a deep fall, and fearing to be snowed up, I decided to leave by the afternoon train to Luray.

And meantime, hurried down again to the glorious Natural Bridge—a sight, I think, one of the very grandest and most impressive in all America.

Then to see another marvel—a wide fissure in a deep cave, down which you look, and see and hear a roaring violent rush of water—the "lost river," a subterranean torrent, of which this is the only known glimpse.

At last it was time to return to the Pavilion, where I had the pleasure of making the acquaintance of Mrs. Parsons, on whose property all these wonders occur, and to which, at all times, she allows access to the public.

In summer it must be one of the most fascinating places in the world to stop at, for, in addition to these marvels, there are mountains to be explored and ascended, and walks, and rides, and drives in all directions, in the loveliest scenery, which in winter are of course inaccessible.

After a late luncheon, it was time to start ; the little carriage with the strong pony came to the door, and away

we trotted through the snow and icy creek, thick flakes beginning to fall.

The train was due at 4 p.m., and came "on time" (punctually), and proceeded at full speed through the lovely Shenandoah Valley, now veiled in snow, as well as its guardian ranges, its rivers sheeted with ice. It was sad to think of the terrible and ghastly scenes of wounds and death this peaceful vale had witnessed—the early Confederate successes under Johnston, and "Stonewall Jackson" who came to so sad an end in the early days of the war, shot by mistake by his own men; and the still greater successes of the Federals under Sheridan at Cedar Creek and elsewhere, towards the close of this frightfully destructive, fratricidal war, in which the hideous loss of life, especially of young life—for the flower of the gallant youth of the country had everywhere volunteered *en masse*—exceeded all previous records of carnage, scarcely excepting the Napoleonic wars!

At about 6 p.m. we reached Luray, a pretty miniature city perched on a height, from which it looks across the Shenandoah Valley to exquisite distant views of the Blue Ridge; its streets beautifully shaded, and many gardens, and boasting some very powerful mineral springs a little way off; but its incomparable pride the famous wonderful caves.

These caverns were originally discovered in 1795 by Ruffin, a celebrated hunter, who was shortly afterwards killed, fighting against Indians; and no further exploration was made till 1825, when a party of explorers from Luray, after much search, succeeded in finding an opening, through which they made their way for a distance of half a mile, seeing many wonders, of which they published an account.

From that time, strange to say, no further attempt at discovery was made; curiosity was, apparently, satisfied, and the story of the wonderful caverns, as years rolled by, came to be treated as a mere legendary myth. At last, in 1878, one Stebbins, a photographer of Luray, began a systematic search for the lost cave, and, in conjunction with friends, whilst prospecting the traditionary "conical hill," discovered a large hole, through which a strong current was blowing from the interior. They set to work with pickaxes, and an opening was made into the hollow ground, into the depths of which one of the party had the courage to have himself let down by a rope, armed with a supply of candles.

He found himself in a narrow rift, through a hole at the end of which he crawled a long way, emerging at last into the marvels of the "Entrance Hall." His friends, alarmed at his long absence, descended to his relief, and his courage was rewarded by his name (Campbell) being given to one of the grandest halls of the cave.

From the depot, I proceeded to the Mansion Inn, very warm and comfortable; and early next morning started, in a pelting snowstorm and icy blasts of wind, in a four-wheeled sort of trap with a hood, through snow so deep that the two strong horses required to drag us struggled and plunged in the deep drifts till they nearly upset us. However, although frozen and one mass of snow, we at last reached the conical hill, and alighted at the little house built up against a rocky dome at the top, where you take off your wraps and put on a waterproof (if you have had the wisdom to bring one), the resident guide lights seven or eight candles, securely fixed upon small trays protected on one side from draughts, one of which he gives you to carry, himself armed with another, in addition to

plentiful coils of magnesium light ; he then opens a door, and, lo ! there you are in the cave, descending a steep, slippery staircase, till you reach, at a considerable depth, what is called the " entrance hall."

The temperature here, and in the whole of the caverns, remains always at from 54 to 58 deg. Fahr. The ventilation is said to be everywhere perfect, although there are moments, in the narrower and more intricate parts, when one feels, or perhaps imagines, a suffocating sense of weight and oppression.

In summer the caverns are lighted by electricity, but in winter the few and rare visitors have to be content with tallow candles and magnesium lights.

At once you feel plunged into a new and strange " Wonderland ! "

At first, in the awful darkness just made visible by the seven or eight candles, one is only dimly aware of a gigantic column of ghastly white, reaching from floor to ceiling, shining and dripping, with curious incrustations. But eyes soon get accustomed, and everything becomes distinct, and you pass through the great entrance, prepared to enter, with due awe and reverence for Nature's mighty handiwork, into the range upon range of vast halls, gardens, fountains, lakes, and fearful abysses, all encompassed and teeming with strange shapes and fantastic growths, passing all imagination, and baffling description !

The beginning of the slow growth of the huger of these formations carries you back to a period millions of years ago ; the " blue limestone " dolomite, which constitutes this hill, belongs to the middle period of the Lower Silurian ; and here is found a strange formation, unknown elsewhere, to which the name " helictite " has been given —neither stalactite nor stalagmite—but extending hori-

zontally, without support, to a distance of four or five inches, after which it grows in various snaky and contorted forms, mostly upward and scarcely ever downward.

No gypsum occurs in this cave.

One very curious helictite formation is an admirably-shaped small pink stone hand with perfectly-formed fingers, extending horizontally, without support, from a mass of translucent alabaster drapery.

At one point you come to a terrific abyss, 70 feet deep and 500 long, called Pluto's chasm, at the further end of which, in black darkness, enhanced by surrounding shining giant draperies, hangs suspended—its point of suspension invisible—a stalactite ghostly form with threatening arm extended, a really startling presentment of a spook!

Then the Fish-market, in which thousands of perfectly-formed fishes, with parted tails, hang suspended in thick, yet absolutely distinct masses, even scaly and coloured as they should be, wet and glossy (as if just caught) by the action of the ever-trickling water. A “frozen fountain,” of which the exquisite upward and falling jets glitter like drops of water turned to diamonds, many “frozen cascades,” and a gorgeous one of shining chalcedony. An absolutely perfect “scaly dragon” twisted round the delicate spirals of, as it were, some lovely fragment broken from the groining of a Gothic church.

A huge stone basket of exquisitely-grouped marbled fruits, perfect in form and bloom, and a basket of flowers, equally beautiful.

A “cathedral,” with stately columns covered with exquisite tracery, in which an “organ,” with innumerable translucent pipes, gives forth grandly deep and sonorous perfect harmonies when gently struck.



"DRAGON," LURAY CAVES.

The lovely "gnome's pavilion," covered with fairy-like tracery in dazzlingly-white crystals.

The "Saracen's" and "Stonewall's" tents—marvellous both, one in yellow, the other snowy white.

A mermaid, simply perfect!

A "vegetable garden," stocked with every imaginable vegetable; a "theatre," with a stage, on which spectral actors stand turned to stone; a "giant's hall," where everything is on a gigantic scale, with stalagmitic pyramidal columns of stupendous size and dazzling ornamentation, on the floor of which may be seen the print of a mocassined foot.

A huge "tower of Babel," and a "leaning one of Pisa," of marvellous beauty and finish, snowy white! "Botryoids," bunches of grapes, very beautiful, resulting from the be-sprinkling of fine spray.

An "Angel's wing," of colossal size, every feather standing out separately in delicate fretwork of dazzling snowwhiteness.

"Titania's veil," an exquisitely-beautiful, almost transparent mass of most delicate drapery. Draperies of every size and hue and texture, most of them musically resonant. A "wet blanket," that you can scarcely believe is not the real thing!

An exquisite "crystal spring," in a huge marble basin raised some feet from the floor, inside and out one serried brilliant mass of the loveliest shining crystals of lime—a circular canopy of translucent stalactites suspended over it from above.

"Alcinda's Spring," a large ornamented shallow basin, lined with brilliant crystals, on the summit of a stony bank, brimful of transparent sparkling water, which flows into a series of basins, symmetrically placed by

nature on the descending slope, gracefully decreasing in size.

Lions, elephants, birds, statuary in admirable groups and single figures, cannon-balls, a bird's nest, with three perfect white eggs! (cave-pearls). Sixteen alabaster scarves, hanging all of a row, of the loveliest textures, folds, and colours! Then the magnificent "ball-room," in which the good people of the neighbourhood come to be married, the wedding breakfast laid out in an adjoining hall.

"Hades," a region of crystal lakes, encrusted with exquisite formations, full of pellucid water, over-arched by magnificent stalactites.

"Campbell's hall," and many other superb halls; and a fallen monster column, weighing 170 tons, which scientists say, judging by the overlying stalactitic masses, must have lain there over 4,000 years—seven millions of years consumed in its formation!

All these marvels, for ever in a never-resting state of slow growth, and decay, and re-formation!

In short, no words can give the faintest notion of the incredible wonders of these enchanted caverns, unrivalled in the whole known world, and far surpassing in interest, of every kind, the great "Mammoth cave" of Kentucky, gigantic in size and extent but almost bare.

Hour after hour passed, but when at last we returned to the light of day, I felt that I had seen only an infinitesimal portion of the wonders below. Many grand caverns, including the "crystal room," so called because studded with innumerable clusters of large transparent hexagonal crystals, were inaccessible to me, being to be reached only by crawling twenty or thirty feet on all fours, along a low, narrow passage in the rock, deep in watery mud.

In the little house above, I chose a few specimens of divers of the formations, some almost rivalling in beauty the lovely Mexican onyx; and then plunged once more through snowdrifts and snowstorm back to the Mansion Inn, where a good dinner was not to be despised—immediately after which I had to hurry off to catch the 5.30 p.m. train to Shenandoah junction, where we arrived two hours later in raging wind and snow. The connecting train to Washington, D. C., was not due till 9.40, so two hours had to be spent, as best one might, in a wretched waiting-room, containing two or three wooden benches without backs, already occupied by negresses, and a huge stove, giving out such stifling heat, that I was compelled to take refuge in the snow outside, returning for a minute or two when absolutely frost-bitten. It is really outrageous that there should be no better accommodation at a junction station where so much waiting has to be done. All American depots are lamentably deficient in this respect, and this is another of the serious *désagréments* of American travel. Add to which, at junctions, five or six trains often stand all of a row, in and out of which you have to thread your way with barely room to walk between, at the imminent risk of being crushed or run over.

CHAPTER XXV.

Washington (District of Columbia)—Corcoran Gallery of Art—Smithsonian Institution—National Museum—Capitol—Mount Vernon.

AT last, far from “on time,” the train-bell began to clang, and about 1 a.m. we reached Washington, and the ‘bus of the “Arlington” rapidly conveyed me to that excellent hotel, where my baggage was safely awaiting.

January 17. Brilliant sunshine and blue sky, and a mere powdering of snow, the air quite mild—a most welcome change; and joyfully I proceeded, after an excellent early breakfast, to look round the immediate neighbourhood.

The “Arlington” is situated within two minutes’ walk of the beautiful square in which the “executive mansion of the President of the United States,” commonly called the White House, stands in a charming small park full of trees and flower-beds, on a height commanding a grand distant view of the gigantic “monument,” fine public buildings forming two sides of the square. Then, at 9 a.m., to the Corcoran Gallery of Art, close by, which includes a grand collection of bronzes by A. L. Barye, a room full of casts from the antique, the “Greek Slave,” a lovely white marble statue by Hiram Powers; and in the picture gallery many fine examples of the Barbazon and other French schools, and many oriental vases of great value.

I returned to the hotel for luncheon, and then hurried to the Smithsonian Institution, at a considerable distance, between the monument and the capitol. This handsome pile of many-towered, red-stone buildings, stands finely on a hill in a beautiful park laid out with fine trees and gardens, and was named after its founder, an English Mr. Smithson, who had never visited America.

Its varied collections are full of interest, especially the archæological—its relics of prehistoric Indian races and models of strange “mounds,” amongst them the extraordinary “serpent-mound,” in Adams County, Ohio, 1,000 feet long and 5 feet high, its wide open jaw inclosing a giant egg, its tail three times coiled; and the ancient “cliff-dwellings” in Arizona and New Mexico. A charming collection of stuffed birds, particularly of that heavenly denizen of American woods, the fairy humming-bird.

After the Smithsonian had closed, at about 4 p.m., I walked through gardens and beautiful park-like grounds, to the majestic, snow-white capitol, golden in the sunset light, built upon the edge of a precipitous hill, from which it magnificently dominates the city. It consists of two wings of white marble, and a centre of stone painted white, but which is to be eventually cased in white marble, surmounted by a fine dome, on the summit of which stands a colossal figure of Liberty.

A grand marble terrace, ascended from below by wide and imposing flights of marble steps, extends, guarded by a marble balustrade, along the whole front of the classic building, commanding a superb view of the city and the noble monument to George Washington on its opposite rival hill; and the winding waters of the wide Potomac, dividing the little neutral District of Columbia from the green lands of Virginia, stretching far away into the

horizon—in the furthest distance, the Blue Ridge, dimly discernible—the sun just setting opposite in crimson and gold. No hour could have been more perfect for this beautiful sight!

I walked down the marble steps into the park, up the opposite hill past the museum, to the high eminence, clothed in beautiful turf, on the highest point of which stands the infinitely grand and beautiful obelisk of white marble, 555 feet high—the highest and most imposing monument in the world—erected to the memory of the heroic and good George Washington, finished only eleven years ago! The surrounding views are superbly extensive; the air bracing and most exhilarating, rapidly turning colder, and that night it froze so sharply that the next morning the Potomac was dotted all over with ice-floes rapidly solidifying into sheets of ice.

Just below the obelisk the wide road encircles a beautiful round green expanse of turf, across which I saved much time by walking—which, however, “Keep Off the grass!” in large letters, on various small posts, peremptorily forbade.

Had I been politely “requested” I might have listened, but a “command” I thought might be disregarded; and safely accomplished the transit, in the face of an astonished park-keeper, who, however, made no remark—continuing through the beautiful park all the way to the White Lodge, and so home to the “Arlington”—a most delightful walk!

The next morning I had set aside for the pilgrimage to Mount Vernon, the ancestral home of Washington.

The weather, alas! had completely changed; an icy wind was blowing, snow had fallen during the night, and heavy clouds seemed gathering for more.

At 8 a.m. the hotel 'bus takes its "guests" to the wharf on the Potomac, whence the strong little river steamer starts.

We were soon off ; the wind blew in sharp and icy gusts up the river, which was coated with ice-floes and solid ice, through which we crunched with a grinding noise, our speed much retarded thereby.

At first the banks are flat, here and there prettily fringed with poplars ; after a time rising into rocky bluffs, densely crowned with shrubs and trees ; the river beautiful in its majestic width, and its strong, but quiet onward flow. One or two fortified sites are passed, including Fort Monroe, commemorating that president of whose "doctrine" (much exaggerated) we hear so much, and a small town or two ; fifteen miles we steam to Mount Vernon, the banks rising to the imposing height of 200 feet, the beautiful forest of trees making them appear still higher. At last we reach the little pier, with some difficulty grinding through the here thick and solid ice, and land.

The boat steamed up the river, and the pilgrims walk up the sandy shore, to well-kept gravel walks winding up through charming woods, passing a plain brick inclosure on higher ground, in which, protected by a handsome iron grated railing, stand, side by side in full view, the two sarcophagi in which George Washington and his wife Martha lie buried.

A little higher up, the trees open out on the summit of the wooded bluff into a wide expanse of grassy lawn, fringed with lovely evergreens and deciduous trees not yet quite denuded of their autumnal gold. Under a splendid sycamore a bench, from which a grand and charming view of quiet repose—the broad winding river with its calm

majestic flow, and far-reaching lands green and wooded, beyond. At this moment the sun deigned to shine and smile on the poetic scene, the favourite one of the hero, who was wont to spend here many peaceful hours, after the long turmoil of his stormy life, during the two years that yet remained to him after he had taken his final leave of the madding world, refusing to be elected a third time to the Presidency of the Republic his strong arm had created.

Straight across the lawn stands the ancestral wooden mansion with extensive buildings at the back, where the negro slaves resided, also the horses; George Washington having been the younger son of a wealthy planter possessed of a large landed estate.

The house has the usual veranda, covered with the lovely "virginian creeper," and contains many rooms, none large. Touching it is to see how, after the final establishment of Independence, each of the original thirteen states vied with one another in newly re-furnishing each a room with the best of their then scanty produce and wares, for the beloved and heroic "Father of their country."

Everything remains, or has been replaced, just as it was on December 14th, 1799—the day on which he peacefully passed to his rest—his devoted wife Martha surviving him till 1801.

The house is full of interesting portraits of himself and wife and friends—Benjamin Franklin, Alexander Hamilton, La Fayette, Thomas Jefferson, Adams, Hopkins the first commander of the American navy, and innumerable other interesting personalities—and contains many personal and other relics.

The whole, including the immediately surrounding 200 acres, has been bought by the Mount Vernon Ladies'

Association, and is all kept in beautiful order in national remembrance of the great founder of the United States.

It is curious to think that in the first ministry of his first presidency, the leaders of *both* political parties were included. Thomas Jefferson, author of that noblest and most touching of documents, the Declaration of Independence, and head of the Republican party (now called Democratic); and Alexander Hamilton, the leader, conjointly with Washington himself, of the Federalist party (now called Republican), who, after a brilliant military career during the War of Independence, became a still more distinguished lawyer and statesman. He drew up the articles of the Federal Constitution, and prevailed upon congress to adopt the debts incurred by the nation for the conduct of the war, and established a national bank. Many ornamental trees have been planted in the grounds by distinguished visitors—one, I think, by the Prince of Wales.

The icy wind every moment increased in violence, cutting into one's very bones, snow beginning to fall, and every pilgrim, however great his enthusiasm, wished that the whistle of the returning steamer would make itself heard. Two hours was the allotted time, but nearly four passed before we saw it slowly ploughing its way through the momentarily thickening ice. It was joy to get on board into its comfortable, but of course over-heated, saloon. Luncheon was to be had below, but I had wisely come provided with "crackers."

At last, at 3 p.m. instead of 1.30, struggling through the ice-crust, we reached the wharf, where the Arlington 'bus was waiting for its guests.

The short remainder of the afternoon I spent at the Smithsonian, revelling in the bird collection, especially

that of that most exquisite of fairy beings, the humming bird, the exclusive possession of which may well make America boast; the "Coquettes" with their tiny breasts of living flame, and their dainty, fairy, nodding head plumes; the "Sappho-comet" with long double-tail feathers of indescribable delicacy of finish, the whole tiny bird resplendent in burnished gold with little peacock spots. The endless variety of them—"sunbeams," evening and morning "rainbows," "sylphs," "magnificents," "angels"—all dreams of incredible beauty.

Endless other varieties of beautiful birds, and some hideous, especially one disgusting "hornbill," monstrous bird with huge red snout instead of beak.

Next morning (January 19th), although very cold, was perfectly lovely, and as early as possible I went to the Treasury and the Navy Museum; then, as soon as it opened, to the National Museum, close to the Smithsonian. One of its great attractions is the splendid collection of stuffed buffaloes and other animals, extinct and extant, peculiar to America. All these creatures, as well as the birds, are admirably stuffed, far better than in England; or, perhaps, it may be that the extreme dryness of the atmosphere, aided by the extreme warmth of the museums, keeps the fur and feathers in a crisper and more glossy and better state of preservation.

The ethnological department is also fascinating; and many are the wonderful minerals and shells—and one monster I must not omit—an extraordinary fish, 50 feet long, hung up between floor and ceiling, shaped like a shark, with two gigantic feelers or suckers (like those of an octopus) and seven huge sharp bony swords proceeding from its mouth.

Long before I had seen the half of the sections, I had

to hurry off to the capitol, having an engagement to be shown over the interior.

The entrance, which is ascended by a flight of white marble stairs, faces to the east, the city, in the beginning, having been intended to extend in that direction; the citizens, however, were of another mind, and scattered to the sunnier west, in which I think they did wisely. So the great edifice, on its entrance side, only fronts a few scattered villas and buildings, including a magnificent public library, not yet completed, groups of statuary and trees. The capitol is entered through huge handsome bronze doors, elaborately commemorating in bas-relief episodes in the life of Columbus.

The great Rotunda under the central dome is exceedingly fine, decorated with effective paintings of the great events of American history—four of the eight by Trumbull. Next is the National Hall of Statuary, to which each State is invited to contribute marble statues of two of its shinier lights.

The next point of interest was the Senate, a semi-circular apartment of no especial dignity or magnificence, in which the senators sit in semicircular rows in arm-chairs, strange to say not “rocking,” each with its desk complete.

Numerous boys stand at the back awaiting orders, which are given by means of loud clappings of hands, somewhat distracting, one would imagine, to the orator of the moment.

Ladies are allowed to walk in and out and to occupy armchairs in the back circle, where the senators come and talk to them, making a babel of sound.

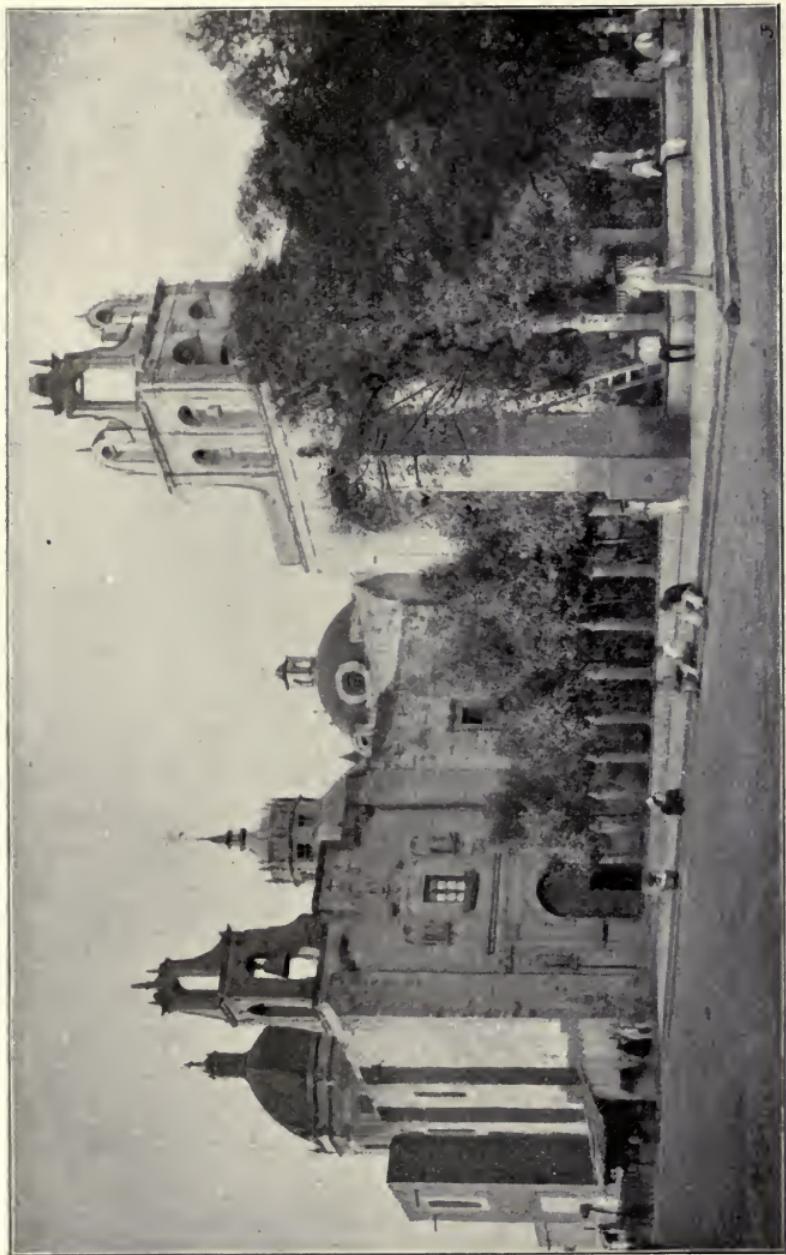
The next departure was to the much handsomer House of Representatives, quite empty, having just adjourned.

On through endless more or less handsome galleries and divers committee and private rooms—one of them much gilt and decorated, set apart for the President.

Then to the upper story, ascended by two grand staircases, adorned with historical paintings of great size; lofty corridors leading to committee rooms. Finally, to the top of the dome, from which a magnificent bird's-eye view of the city and its surroundings. Down again, pausing a few moments on the way, to listen to various curious acoustic effects in the rotunda, and so out.

My next peregrination was through many fine streets to the charming Connecticut Avenue, beginning with a pretty circular garden, and bordered on each side by some of the handsomest residences, including some of the foreign embassies, among them the British, where I proposed to call. It is a spacious, sufficiently handsome, red-brick building, standing in something of a garden in the broad initial part of the avenue.

On the way back I visited several fine stores brilliantly lighted up, and so home to the hotel. This, to my great regret, was my last evening in this beautiful city; so the following morning (January 20th), after a very early breakfast, I went for a last stroll past the charming White House to the grand monument, so magnificently situated, hurrying back to catch the 8.30 train, reaching Baltimore at 10 a.m.



AGUAS CALIENTES—MEXICO. P. 121.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Baltimore — Peabody Institute — Druid Hill Park — Philadelphia — Independence Hall — West Fairmount Park — Atlantic City — Lakewood.

THE weather was very cold but brilliantly sunny, and the day being Sunday, after leaving my things at the "Hotel Rennert," well situated and large, but indifferent, particularly as to cuisine, I strolled up the undulating streets, a short distance, to the central point of the city, Mount Vernon Place, occupying high ground, the highest point of it dominated by a column 130 feet high, on which stands a colossal statue of George Washington.

The little square is charmingly laid out, and surrounded by handsome buildings. A few steps further took me to the cathedral, an imposing domed edifice, less interesting interiorly, just in time for High Mass, after which I looked into several churches in the neighbourhood, in particular, the extremely handsome Gothic Methodist-Episcopal church, where an eloquent funeral sermon was being preached in honour of the obsequies of an unhappy young couple in the city, possessed, said the preacher, of every earthly good, whose house had taken fire one night in the previous week, the husband so devoted to his wife that he refused to allow her to be saved from the flames by anyone but himself, and leaping with her into the street beneath, both were killed.

I returned to the hotel for luncheon, and afterwards "rode" in a tramcar to the entrance of the beautiful Druid-hill Park, 700 acres in extent, laid out with endless drives and walks, high hills and charming dales, the whole full of magnificent trees and one extensive lake, besides the city waterworks.

It was pleasant, in spite of the bitter cold, walking all over the park, the views in all directions, in a quiet way quite beautiful, although the trees were mostly, of course, quite leafless. There is also on one of the park hills a delightful conservatory and hothouses full of beautiful flowers and exotic plants. It came on to snow during the night, and next morning the houses were all roofed in white, the streets to match, a disagreeable frozen rain falling.

Luckily it was not far to Mount Vernon Place, of which nearly one whole side is occupied by the Peabody Institute, founded by the same Mr. Peabody to whom London is so much beholden, and which contains many fine American paintings and casts. Then to the opposite side of the "Place" to see Mr. Walters' world-famous collection of pictures and art objects; but, alas! found it closed, the respected owner having died suddenly a day or two before.

I had hoped to see the Franciscan convent containing an orphanage and industrial schools for black babies and children, but was unfortunately unable to find the address; so, instead, went to see the splendid and admirably-kept John Hopkins Hospital, founded and endowed by the same Mr. Hopkins who likewise presented this, his native city, with the John Hopkins University.

The society of Baltimore is considered the most refined and literary in the United States, with the exception of that of Boston. Jerome Buonaparte, brother of Napoleon I., resided here for some time, having married Miss

Patterson of this city, before being made king of Westphalia. This slice of Virginia, constituting the state of Maryland (so called in honour of Queen Henrietta Maria), had been originally granted by Charles I. to George Calvert, created Lord Baltimore, who had been Secretary of State during the reign of James I. His death having occurred before setting out for his new colony, the latter was re-granted to his son, the second Lord Baltimore, with greatly increased and almost regal powers. He, as well as his father, had embraced Catholicism, and detesting the persecuting mania of that era, determined to build up his new colony on a basis of absolute freedom of conscience, and enacted a law that in his province of Maryland no persecution or coercion on religious grounds should ever be tolerated.

This enlightened and admirable rule, in the narrow and persecuting spirit of that age was not always practically carried out, but it remained fixed as a leading principle, and was equally enacted by William Penn in Pennsylvania ; and, at the present day, for absolute toleration and religious equality, and absence of bigotry, the United States stands unrivalled in the world ; the repressive measures against the Mormons being based on grounds not religious, but simply social and moral.

Baltimore has always been famous for the building of ships since the first rise of the United States navy in 1801, for the prosecution of the war with Tripoli, in which Lieutenant Stephen Decatur, then a mere youth, performed such marvels of daring. Also, in 1815, against the Bey of Algiers, who was forced by the same brilliant officer, in command of the Mediterranean-American squadron, to sign the treaty by which the States exempted themselves from payment of tribute to the pirates of Africa.

In the war with Great Britain in 1812, of which Decatur was again the naval hero, private vessels were everywhere built and fitted as privateers, amongst which the "raking" "Baltimore clippers" became unrivalled for speed, and the magnificent way they were manned, and manœuvred, and fought. Such, in those days, was the desperate courage and emulation of each officer and man, that, in boarding the ships of the enemy, they would pull each other back and down, so anxious was each to be first!

In the afternoon I left for Philadelphia, in driving sleet and snow, which I found in still greater force in the "Quaker city," and proceeded to the Stratford Hotel, fairly comfortable, but with a more than indifferent, and very expensive, restaurant attached.

It is conveniently and centrally situated in Walnut Street, all the best streets being named after trees. The manager kindly presented me with a nice little guide-book of the city, most convenient for carrying about, containing, amidst other useful information, a long list of "Things Wherein We are First," prominent among them being "Morality." Other items were, "the first experimental railroad track," 1809, "the first lightning-rod used in the world, 1752," set up by Benjamin Franklin. "First mariner's quadrant," invented by Godfrey, 1730. "First medical school in United States," 1751. "First paper-mill in America," 1690. "First pianoforte in U.S.," 1775, J. Behrent. "First hospital in America," 1757. "First vessel moved by steam in the world," 1786. And I think I may add almost, if not quite, "First in extremity of cold," for a more icy and bitterly-penetrating wind than blew through those spacious streets I think I never felt.

It was too late that afternoon to do much more than

just reconnoitre the immediate neighbourhood—as far as the great central City Hall Square, where stands the gigantic granite and white marble new City Hall, covering an area of $4\frac{1}{2}$ acres, an exceedingly imposing pile; its giant tower, when completed, will soar to a height of 510 feet, and support on its summit a colossus, 37 feet high, representing William Penn. This tower commands a grand bird's-eye view of this great city, which covers an area of twenty-nine miles, and is situated between the rivers Schuylkill and Delaware, founded 216 years ago by William Penn, son of the admiral of that name celebrated in the wars between England and the Dutch, and who, having been expelled from the university of Oxford for resistance to certain religious innovations, completed his studies at Paris, and soon after joined the Society of Friends, in consequence of which he was turned out of his home; and after much preaching of his doctrines, and persecution in result, was finally put in possession of this portion of New Jersey by Charles II., in payment of a debt owing to the admiral, in honour of whom it was named Pennsylvania.

The site for the city was purchased by Penn from the local Indians, with whom he made a solemn treaty of friendship, in ratification of which they presented him with an embroidered Wampum belt; and this treaty was faithfully observed by both parties as long as Penn lived.

January 22nd. The first and greatest point of interest is, of course, the famous Independence Hall, in Chestnut Street, in which sat the Continental Congress during the war of the Revolution, and, in which, on July 4th, 1776, that most magnificent and pathetic of documents, the Declaration of Independence, written by Thomas Jefferson, was unanimously adopted by Congress.

The Hall is unpretending outside and in, and of small size. On a slightly raised platform stands the table on which the Declaration was signed, with the chairman's arm-chair decorated with an effigy of the rising sun. On the wall hangs the famous original "Rattlesnake flag" of the Union, on which is pictured a triply-coiled rattlesnake, with the defiant motto "Don't tread on me!" also the "Liberty" and "Pine-tree" flags of the Revolution.

Near the table is the great "Liberty bell," originally cast in England, but expressly re-cast in Philadelphia, for the honour of ringing the first peal in celebration of the Declaration. In 1835 a huge crack became visible, and it has only been rung once or twice since, and now is a relic, for ever silent.

The walls are covered with portraits of the signatories of the Declaration, foremost in interest among them being that of its composer, Thomas Jefferson, third President of the United States, remarkable for its noble beauty and dignity; that of Benjamin Franklin, the great scientist, equally great in politics and philanthropy; and the beautiful countenance, full of genius and energy, of Alexander Hamilton, the great framer of the Constitution, of whom Talleyrand said that he was not surpassed even by Napoleon I. in statesman-like genius and force of judgment and character. His life came too soon to an end, in a duel forced upon him by Aaron Burr, on political grounds, in 1804.

The National Museum of the Hall contains many most interesting autographs, letters, and relics, and on the outside front stands a fine statue of Washington.

The Drexell Institute, close by, consists of a fine library and exceedingly interesting museum, containing very valuable collections of textiles, ceramics, carvings, etc.

Next the Carpenter's Hall, also in Chestnut Street, full of interesting memorials of the Revolution, and in which the first Continental Congress assembled in 1774.

Then to the Academy of Fine Arts, in which the galleries are exceedingly fine and well-decorated, and contain a permanent and valuable collection of paintings, many of those by American artists, of great merit. Another very charming exhibition of paintings in oil and water-colour, I saw at Earle's art store. After which there was the Academy of Natural Sciences to be seen, which contains most interesting collections.

The enormous Halls of Post, too, are worth seeing, and contain many memories of the sad civil war; and before returning to the hotel I went over the brilliantly-lighted interior of the huge City Hall, not yet decorated.

When at last I reached the "Stratford," towards supper time, there were no less than three gentlemen of the Philadelphia press, all waiting to "ask my opinion" of "Our City, Our Country, and Our Institutions?" and "was I only globe-trotting? or had I come for some reason? and, if so, what reason?"

The really childish *naïveté* of the curiosity of these interviewers is quite amusing! So I dismissed them with one word of "immense admiration for the beauties of America," and they went away in very good humour, and I was told my "notices" in next day's papers were very "favourable," but hadn't time to read them.

Next morning was beautifully bright but bitterly cold, and I betook myself by electric car to West Fairmont Park, of enormous extent, covering a space of 3,000 acres, containing 50 miles of drives, and 100 miles of charmingly diversified walks and bridle-paths! It boasts also a magni-

ficient horticultural establishment with a fine collection of exotics, and all the useful and medicinal plants of the Continent; and well laid out gardens outside; but the chief interest is the Pennsylvania Museum, built for the Great Centennial Exhibition in 1876, and retained as "Memorial." It teems with interesting objects of art and manufacture, and an excellent small collection of paintings, mostly French. Everywhere in the United States one finds the highest appreciation of French art of all kind, and in all the great towns are to be seen *chefs-d'œuvre* of the great French painters.

There is a fine zoological garden near, and one of the principal sights is the not distant Laurel Hill Cemetery, beautifully planted, with fine vistas, and many monuments—among them, one to Sir Walter Scott, and "Old Mortality."

After this the electric car swiftly conveyed me to the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, where I saw, amongst many interesting things, the famous Wampum belt, presented by the Indians to Penn, an "unwritten treaty" faithfully observed by both sides.

Franklin's printing press is here, and many of the early publications of the Independence.

"Chestnut" and "Walnut" and most of the "Tree Streets" are full of handsome residences, one or two of them containing very good collections of paintings and works of art, ancient and modern.

Most of the best private collections pride themselves, as they well may, on the possession of some of those exquisitely beautiful terra-cotta statuettes from Tanagra, unequalled in the whole ancient art world for grace and charm.

One of the most interesting of the institutions is that for

the deaf and dumb, in which marvels of education have been successfully achieved.

After this I just had time to run through the Wagner Free Institute of Science before starting, at 5 p.m., for Atlantic City, the Margate of America, a distance of about 90 miles. It is immensely resorted to by the Philadelphians for sea-bathing, and has a fine sandy beach, and good hotels overlooking the ocean, which rolls up grandly.

Several miles of raised wooden walks were delightfully sunny, although the icy wind was blowing with ferocity. I found the Traymore Hotel very comfortable, and left the next day, at 2.15 p.m., for another of the famous winter resorts, Lakewood, New Jersey, where I arrived after dark and drove straight to the charming Laurel-in-the-Pines, situated, as its name implies, in beautiful and fragrant pine forests, stretching for miles and miles in all directions, with, just in front, a lovely lake of great extent, now frozen and covered with gay figures skating by electric light.

The cuisine was excellent, and the dining-parlour admirably served by a number of white parlour maids dressed in snowy white. The reception parlours are large and quite charming, and the usual good music and, generally, dancing every evening. The entire hotel is surrounded by magnificent glass corridors forming a series of sunny, delightful winter gardens, in which it was pleasant to sit and read in comfortable rocking-chairs, and forget the bitter outside wind.

Here I lingered three or four days, a terrible waste of time when there was still so much to see!

The weather here, in the midst of these vast pine woods, was comparatively mild when I arrived ; but it soon turned

to snow and extreme cold, in which I departed on January 30th at 10.50 a.m., reaching Jersey city at about noon, crossing over in the huge ferry-boat to New York, driving straight to the Netherlands Hotel, Fifth Avenue, Fifty-ninth Street, where my heavy luggage had preceded me, also the baggage originally left before we started.



"PLUTO'S CHASM," LURAY CAVES. P. 303.

CHAPTER XXVII.

New York—Metropolitan Museum of Art—Lenox Library—
Museum of Natural History—Private collections.

THE "Netherlands" is magnificent and most comfortable, and charmingly and most conveniently situated, overlooking the beautiful Central Park, in which are placed the principal museums; and the prices quite moderate.

Streets, park, and all were deeply enveloped in snow and the wind was sharp and bitter, but the air dry and exhilarating, and the following morning the sun shone brightly, and instantly after breakfast a majestic negro in gorgeous livery, who acted with magnificent dignity as porter, stopped the Fifth Avenue stage, into which I mounted, and in a few minutes was deposited at one of the entrances into the Central Park, where a road, well cleared of snow, led in two minutes to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, unpretending without, but full of priceless treasures within.

The unrivalled treasure of this museum is the Cesnola Collection of Cypriote Antiquities—the finest in the world of Phoenician; and including Greek, Assyrian and archaic Greek art, and magnificent specimens of ancient sarcophagi. This collection also includes wonderful ancient terra-cotta statuettes and pottery, and an exquisitely

beautiful collection of ancient glass—Egyptian, Phœnician, Greek, and Roman, of admirable form and the loveliest iridescence—in short, an inexhaustible feast of beauty and interest, to which one returns with always increasing delight.

There are, in addition to the Cesnola, many other fine collections of antiquities, including iridescent glass, and a perfectly exquisite one of terra-cotta statuettes from Tanagra, miracles of grace and beauty.

The gallery of modern sculpture contains many beautiful statues; one especially interesting, of Napoleon I., by Canova; and many halls are filled with fine casts of statuary and monuments.

The picture galleries on the upper floor include excellent examples of the old masters and modern. Especially valuable is the French modern, amongst which towers Rosa Bonheur's magnificent "Horse Fair," a glorious piece of colour, form and movement, and light and shade, of which the small replica in the London National Gallery gives scant idea. You seem to hear the very ring of the horses' hoofs as they trot to the show! Many more of her smaller paintings are here, exhibiting the various phases of her wonderful genius; lovely, sunlit, mossy dells and breezy hills, where browse admirably-painted cattle and sheep, the character of the animals portrayed with such delicately accurate observant knowledge; and several charming scenes in Fontainebleau and other forests. Many fine cattle scenes also, by her brother, Auguste Bonheur.

Bastien Le Page's "Jeanne d'Arc," in which the heroic peasant-girl, a tall, somewhat gaunt figure with mystic face, stands in her father's orchard garden, listening in wrapt ecstasy to the mysterious "Voices," strange visions

motioning vaguely to her from above. It is an exceedingly beautiful and impressive picture, full of poetry, the masterpiece of the young painter, who so early passed away before his prime, and whose memory calls to mind the young artist friend, Marie Bashkirtseff, also, nearly at the same moment, so sadly claimed by death, in her rising dawn of genius.

There are many exquisite Meissoniers, in particular his superb "Friedland," representing his beloved hero, the great Napoleon, at the highest point of glory. Many enchanting Corots; and many other beautiful examples of French schools, and some excellent English paintings.

A magnificent and huge painting by Bierstadt of Lake Bonner, California; one of his many admirable portrayals of the glorious scenery of the Far West.

The American antiquities on this floor are of the greatest interest, and there is a wonderful collection of Chinese art and porcelain of marvellous delicacy, transparency, and colouring.

When the Museum closed, which it does rather early in the afternoon, I had time for a long walk over the Park, which consists of miniature hills and dales all charmingly laid out with lakes and fountains and cascades, and endless walks and drives: the highest point dominated by the beautiful rose-coloured obelisk, 69 feet high—"Cleopatra's Needle"—with inscriptions by Thothmes III., by whom it was originally erected at Heliopolis, and three centuries later additionally inscribed by Rameses II. (*circa* 1200 b.c.). Its rose-colour was deepened to crimson by the rays of a gorgeous sunset, intensified by the shining white of the unbroken snow, with which park and trees were densely veiled, lovely pendent icicles and frozen wreaths of snow covering every branch.

The next few days were entirely devoted to the Museum of Art and the Lenox Library (in the Fifth Avenue, close to my hotel) in which the upper storey is given to paintings and portraits, and the ground floor to a wonderful collection of rare books and illuminated MSS., with exquisite mediæval miniature paintings of untold value and beauty. Many early printed bibles, among them the famous "Mazarin Bible," printed in 1455 by Gutenberg and Fust; maps and charts used by Columbus and other early discoverers, all of fascinating interest.

February 4th. I was invited to see art collections in several private houses, at one of which I was to see two beautiful paintings by my friend at Biltmore, Miss A'Becket, and a collection of exquisite Tanagra statuettes, and Greek and Roman iridescent glass. On February 5th I went, for the first time, to the Museum of Natural History, a pleasant, though, as usual, bitterly cold, walk of about twenty minutes across Central Park, at the opposite side of which it is situated, in Eighth Avenue, Eighty-first Street. It is a huge and handsome building, a feast of instruction, but, like the Museum of Art, only a fragment, as it were, of what the edifice will be when completed.

The bird collection, although not so large as that of Philadelphia, is even more beautiful.

Unutterable gems of humming-birds, especially its heavenly "Coquette" tribe; and marvellous "Trogons," only fit for Paradise! The birds yclept of "Paradise" not for a moment comparable to them.

The beauty of these Trogons passes description! There was one in particular before which one stood simply fascinated! The most exquisitely-delicate rose-pink breast, the back and wings transmuted, as it were, and iridescent

into an indescribable golden-green ; the feathers of a texture of delicate and marvellous beauty that is not to be seen in any other tribe or family of birds in the world ; a perfectly unique texture, something between the softest and softest of feather material, and delicate feathery fern, something too dainty and beautiful for words, of the most exquisite, soft velvety bloom and gloss ; others of every variety of rainbow hue,—inconceivably beautiful ! Another variety of Trogon, the Quetzals, arrayed in the same divinely-lovely feather texture and colouring, with the proud addition of long, graceful sweeping tails, consisting only of three lovely single feathers, each a perfect masterpiece !

The “Pitta” tribe is another American one of great beauty.

The buffaloes and moose here are superb ; the antelopes ranging down to little dainty creatures, tinier than any tiny lap-dog.

The monkeys are immensely numerous, including many gigantic specimens of those painful atrocities, chimpanzees, ourang-outangs, and gorillas. The insect collection includes terrible creeping things, large and small.

A hideous collection of snakes, and snakes’ eggs, so absolutely like hens’ eggs, that I was not surprised at a horrible story I was told, of a quantity of eggs brought into his mother’s cottage by a little boy one day from outside, and placed by her in a nest in a warm corner of the kitchen to be sat upon by her only hen ; and some time after, one morning, there was her hen lying dead, and instead of young chickens, a living, writhing brood of deadly rattlesnakes !

February 6th. I came again for a long day at the Natural History Museum, and looked through the exquisite collec-

tion of shells and fossils, among which an antediluvian bird nearly twice as tall as a giraffe ; and a portion of a "sea-serpent" (*Mosa Saurus Maximus*) which, like the Liodon and Clidastes, disported itself in cretaceous seas.

Numerous beautifully formed "stone lilies," common in the Paleozoic era.

In the mineral department, Arizona stands pre-eminent, providing specimens of its marvellous "Petrified forest of agatized trees," Chalcedony Park, Apache County. Trunks of huge trees consisting entirely of one vast and beautiful deposit of agate, amethyst, chalcedony, etc., mineralized by means of hot springs, holding silica in solution, which is supposed to have replaced the woody matter as it gradually became removed by decay. These sections of tree-trunks have been beautifully polished.

From the copper-mines of Arizona there are specimens of the most exquisite beauty—stalactites perfectly translucent of the most wonderful tints of delicate sea-green and rose-pink and blue. Blocks of aragonite of various shades of loveliest blue ; and exquisite crystals of light blue azonite and superb blocks of magnificently-coloured Malachite.

The lower ground-floor is occupied by the Jessop Collection of North American Woods, each specimen being illustrated by a photograph of its living parent tree, and its habitat, and paintings of its flowers and fruit.

The day had been brilliantly sunny but freezingly cold ; between 3 and 4 p.m., whilst in the upper galleries, there was a sudden stampede of the few persons present to the window, where there was evidently something curious to look at ; so I followed, and we saw an absolutely perfect par-helion, four perfect images of the sun, encircling it in the form of a cross, each surrounded by a wide and brilliant halo of radiance.

It was a most beautiful sight—a very common one in Arctic regions—but, the Curator said, of extraordinary rarity at New York, only one having been previously recorded, at a time of extreme cold.

The mock suns retained their brilliancy till the sun disappeared, when they vanished also.

As I walked home through the park, the beauty of the scene was quite indescribable, the gloriously brilliant scarlet rays of sunset illuminating the glittering frozen snow and icicles with which every tree and shrub was covered ; but the cold was biting beyond words.

During the night a snowstorm came on with a violent gale, and next morning (February 7th) the snow was drifting in all directions, and only one or two walks were being kept cleared ; so I found some difficulty in finding my way across to the Museum of Natural History, and the cold was more intense than ever, even when the wind dropped. I returned to the hotel at midday, as I was engaged to go in the afternoon, by appointment, with an American friend, to see Mr. Havemeyer's wonderful collection of Rembrandts.

The house, not large, was furnished in yellow and gold ; the art treasures all exquisite, including some of the loveliest Tanagra statuettes I had yet seen, and beautiful bronzes, and many gems of paintings ; in one room, nine or more magnificent Rembrandts, placed side by side, the most exquisite of which was the famous "Doreur," and a wonderful old woman.

Afterwards we visited one or two studios, and saw some interesting paintings.

That night the snowstorm and gale returned with redoubled fury—this time a recognized "blizzard." In the morning (February 8th) it was in full force, a hurricane

blowing, and, although the snow only occasionally fell, it was being violently whirled and tossed by the gale in such dense clouds of fine, minute frozen particles, that no windows or anything could keep it out; and out of doors (where only necessity dragged anyone) the sensation, as it penetrated eyes, nose, ears, everything, was of absolute suffocation.

It looked almost impossible to face, but having an engagement to see Mrs. W. H. Vanderbilt's beautiful art collection, I felt compelled to make the attempt.

No cabs were to be had, but happily it was not far off, so wrapping a shawl over my hat and face, somehow, with the help of my cicerone, almost choked by the fine snow which penetrated through shawl and all, and nearly blown away by the fearful gusts, we at last managed to get there.

I was well rewarded by the art-feast I found there. First and foremost Turner's exquisitely lovely "Fountain of Indolence," which has never been engraved; nine or ten admirable Meissoniers; three of Millet's most poetical and lovely works, the "Sower," "Shepherd," and "Water-Carrier," now priceless, and for which he himself received such miserable pittances; de Neuville's "Le Bourget," Roybet's "Musical Party," several good paintings by Baron Leys, of whom Alma Tadema was a pupil; and many other beautiful paintings and objects of art.

The drawing-room is very magnificent, but the picture gallery scarcely light enough.

The next day the blizzard continued, but the hurricane of wind a trifle less; so I managed to struggle out and spent the morning at the New York Historical Society, containing interesting Assyrian and Egyptian collections, the latter including three mummies of the "Sacred Bull;"

CAVE DWELLINGS—ARIZONA. P. 110.



many portraits also of great interest. And in the afternoon there were several private collections to be visited by appointment, and some lovely French paintings at an art dealer's.

February 10th was Sunday. The blizzard slightly abating, I succeeded in struggling out to St. Patrick's Cathedral, not very far in Fifth Avenue, and the Museum of Art in the afternoon.

At 11 p.m. I left by train for Boston, where I arrived at 6.30 a.m. on Monday, driving straight—deep snow everywhere—to the Brunswick Hotel, delightfully situated at the corner of Copley Square, in which all the art interest of Boston is centred.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Boston—Trinity Church—Museum of Fine Arts—Plymouth Rock.

THE "Brunswick" is large and comfortable, and the parlours and corridors adorned with excellent paintings by American artists, placed there on view for sale.

After breakfasting I walked, in icily cold, but quite clear weather, to the Museum of Natural History, close by, where the bird collection seemed poor after the magnificent one of New York, the feathers rather puffed and untidy; but, *en revanche*, a splendid show of American serpents, one huge rattlesnake from the south as thick and long as a boa-constrictor. Among the fossils was a gigantically colossal armadillo, Post-Tertiary period, from South America.

The cold in this museum passed all words! Either the warming apparatus had gone wrong, or there was none, which might (if ordinarily the case) possibly account for the untidy condition of the birds.

I next visited the famous Trinity Church in Copley Square—the great pride of Boston, designed by H. H. Richardson—a very peculiar, but exceedingly grand and imposing edifice. It is being elaborately decorated, and contains several most beautiful stained-glass windows, designed by Burne-Jones and executed by Morris, the colouring of which is quite exquisite. Another beautiful

and immense window, a "symphony in greens and blues," exceedingly effective and reposeful in colour to eye and mind, is by La Farge. The whole of the scheme of interior decoration is also by La Farge.

The exterior is exceedingly picturesque and striking, and will be still more so when the towers of the original design are added. The effect of the dominating massive tower at the centre, 210 feet high, is grand and imposing, and the whole forms a most original and harmonious structure.

A graceful piece of sentiment has been worked into the beautiful open cloister, connecting the church with a small chapel outside, by the careful insertion into its ornamental tracery of a lovely fragment of old Gothic sculpture, taken from the ancient church of St. Botolph at Boston in the "old country" beyond seas.

The interior of Trinity struck me, at first, as more original and eccentric than beautiful, and as more suited to a great concert or oratorio hall than to a church.

But after a time it grows upon one, and the impression of majestic grandeur deepens, to some extent, to one befitting a church. The organ is exceedingly fine, and was being beautifully played once or twice during visits I made, at intervals, to the church, always with an increasing sense of its beauty.

The grand new Public Library forms a fitting south side to Copley Square, elaborately decorated, and possessed of a charming central court, where readers may take their books into the open air.

The Museum of Fine Arts also rises up in this square; and there I gladly spent the remainder of the day, seeing, first, the collection of pictures, ancient and modern, of which the crowning glory is "The Adoration,"

by Tintoretto, divinely beautiful ; "A Virgin and Child," by Sasso Ferrato, also infinitely lovely ; and one Titian, a beautiful "Magdalen," of which there are said to be forty-three replicas (so-called) in various parts of the world !

The French schools are, as everywhere in America, admirably represented. Many Meissoniers, Fromentins, Daubignys, Diaz, etc. ; a magnificent wood-scene on a large scale by Troyon, and one of like size by Corot ; a wonderfully beautiful miniature of Napoleon I., of large size, by F. Millet ; several very decorative large pictures by Puvis de Chavannes ; and a replica of "The Sower," by Millet, which I had seen at Mrs. W. H. Vanderbilt's. This one I thought the finer of the two, richer and deeper in colouring ; it is also slightly larger and more detailed.

An interesting, huge picture, by Copley, represents a family group, consisting of himself, his wife and children (one of whom became, in after life, celebrated as Lord Lyndhurst), and his wife's father, named Clark, a merchant of Boston, whose ships, laden with tea from England, became the theatre of the famous "Boston tea-party," having been boarded on their arrival in the port of Boston by fifty patriots, disguised as Mohawks, who calmly proceeded to empty the contents of the whole consignment into the sea, the Americans having decided to receive no tea from England, and consequently to drink none (they made tea of herbs, etc., instead), till the obnoxious tax upon it should be removed—"no taxation without representation" being the cry ; and the abhorrent Stamp Act, and many other taxes having been already (in 1766) repealed, in response to popular clamour.

The closing of Boston port by the British Government, in castigation for this "tea-party," till payment should be

made for the wasted tea, was the last immediate of the many causes of the calling together of the first Continental Congress in 1774, followed, the next year (April, 1775), by the first fights of the Revolution—the battles of Lexington and Bunker Hill, both in the near neighbourhood of Boston; the first being claimed as a victory, and the second as a “moral” one, by the Americans.

The companion picture to this was painted by Copley from the story of an American fellow-passenger to England, named Watson, who told him that, in his boyhood, he had been one day bathing off-ship, when he suddenly became aware of a rapidly-advancing gigantic shark, and as he swam, with mad shrieks for help, wildly flying for his life, he felt the yawning jaws close upon his leg, and the next moment he faintly saw them re-opening to take in the rest of him, when, at that very instant, a harpoon, hurled with tremendous force from a neighbouring boat, sent the huge brute with a rush to the bottom, and saved his life. This Watson, thus deprived of one leg, afterwards became Lord Mayor of London, and died a governor of the Bank of England.

After the accomplishment of the Independence, Copley left America for ever, and settled with his family in England.

One room is devoted to a curious and weird, but very fine collection of Blake's drawings—illustrations of Milton and Dante, etc.—and contains also a very interesting portrait of Shakespeare, painted on a panel of the woodwork of the Old Globe Tavern in London, and Albrecht Dürer's curious and impressive picture of “Death and the Knight riding together.”

Among the American paintings is a most lovely and poetical sea-piece called “The Lair of the Sea-Serpent,”

and many excellent and most interesting portraits, including several by Morse, the inventor of the electric telegraph (1835), and Fulton, the builder of the first practical steam-boat (1807). Among them fine portraits of Patrick Henry and James Otis, brilliant lawyers and orators—leaders of the agitation for the repeal of the Stamp Act—the latter, a Bostonian, the originator of the cry “No taxation without representation ;” and the former famous for his great speech in reprobation of that tax, ending with: “Cæsar had his Brutus, Charles I. his Cromwell, and George III.”—interrupted by loud cries of “Treason !” from his opponents—he calmly added, “may profit by their example—and if that is treason, make the most of it !”

A charming portrait, also, of the handsome La Fayette, who, in 1777, at the age of nineteen, left his great position in France to volunteer his services and his fortune in aid of American liberty, greatly distinguishing himself in many fights, promoted by Washington to the rank of major-general, and ridiculed by Cornwallis as the “little boy,” who, however, greatly contributed to the former’s final fiasco.

In after years American Congress, mindful of his great services in their hour of need, voted him a presentation of 200,000 dollars and a township of land.

Interesting portraits, too, of many gallant sailors, the first commanders of the little navy: Stephen Decatur, whose daring exploits read like brilliant romances ; Captain Lawrence, mortally wounded in desperate fight, whose last words, as he was carried below dying, “Don’t give up the ship !” became the battle-cry of the U.S. Navy—recalling our immortal Nelson’s “England expects every man to do his duty !” or, as he is said to have given the order for the signal, “England confides that every man will do his

duty!"—Paul H. Jones, Commodore Perry, and many others, one braver and more daring than another—which, in short, may be said of every man of their magnificent little first, short-lived navy—for it was put an end to—actually *sold*—when the Republican party of that day (or “radical-democratic,” as opposed to the early Federal, accused by the former of being “aristocratic” and “monarchical” in its tendency) came into power in 1800—an example that the miserable and contemptible “little Englanders” of to-day would wish to emulate!—but which uprose again during the war of 1812, and performed prodigies of successful valour.

In this war the “Privateers” did immense execution, and the Mother-Country was compelled, temporarily, to yield the palm of success to her brave and adventurous American sons, seasoned and practised in constant feats of daring by their never-ending struggles and encounters with the savage aborigines.

The boast of this museum is its superb and immense collection of Japanese curios, including magnificent porcelain and enamels—one very ancient blue enamel Japanese vase, covered with small holes and scratches, into which solid gold has been beaten, and wonderful Chinese porcelain of the most extraordinary delicacy and beauty—to which many great halls and galleries are devoted.

The collection of casts from the antique is extremely fine and complete; among them a lovely one of the fascinating “Faun” of the Capitoline Museum—the “Marble Faun” of Nathaniel Hawthorne’s exquisite and most poetic romance, “Transformation.”

The halls devoted to antiquities contain several marvellously beautiful Etruscan sarcophagi, worthy of Greek art, two of them especially lovely, recumbent figures, and

allegorical, admirably sculptured bas-reliefs on the sides, found at Vulci in Central Italy in 1845, many Egyptian remains, and some perfect statuettes from Tanagra.

Next day (February 12th) I spent entirely again at the Museum of Fine Arts ; and after it closed, to the Art Club, where I found nothing very particular ; then to several churches, and through some of the principal residence streets, in one of the finest of which, Beacon Street, I saw the pleasant home, covered with "Boston ivy" (which we call *Ampelopsis Veitchii*), in which Oliver Wendell Holmes lived and died.

February 13th.—I set out early on a pilgrimage—the most deeply interesting of all my experiences in the States—to Plymouth Rock.

I reached Plymouth at 10 a.m. (by train).

Snow was thickly falling, and the thermometer stood many degrees below zero ; an icy wind blew in violent gusts, cutting to the very bone, but I was glad. It was exactly the icy, wild, desolate, wintry kind of weather that alone could harmonize with the memories of this sad yet glorious spot.

I walked first, or rather climbed, in deep snow and over slippery sheets of ice, to the summit of the ancient Burial Hill, crowded with leafless trees, from which you command the bay, bounded to the east by the elbow-shaped Cape Cod—a shivering, ice-cold, desolate, and dreary prospect !

How well and feelingly I could picture to myself that sad and miserable, but most memorable day, December 20th, 1620, when, in the brave search for a home and land of religious freedom, in similar snow and ice and cutting blasts, without home, without shelter, with scanty food and scanty clothing, in momentary fear of attack by fierce

and warlike savages, half their numbers left behind in their temporary home at Leyden, these unhappy pilgrims, sick with the long, cold, stormy months at sea, crowded in that poor little vessel, the humble "Mayflower," seeing before them only the shelterless and desolate shore, all ice and snow and bitter wind, were landed, one by one, on the little "Rock" beneath.

They had wished to land on the banks of the Hudson River, but their captain, driven by storm from his reckoning, brought them to Cape Cod, and skirting the shores of the cheerless bay, they fixed to land on a spot slightly protected by the projecting Cape, marked "Plymouth" on a map laid down by the renowned Captain John Smith, six years before, when he sailed past on his pioneering voyage along the coast, in the little open pinnace "Discovery," of only twenty tons, which had sailed across the broad Atlantic.

With sad and shrinking hearts but noble and steadfast courage, the little band of 100 souls, self-exiled for conscience sake, faced the bitter cold and snow, and ice-clad inhospitable shore, and under the brave leadership of their captain, Myles Standish, and their pastor, Brewster, raised a few tents and huts in which they gathered the few utensils and scanty, humble pieces of home furniture the little "Mayflower" had been able to hold; and on a spot cleared of its Indian dwellers by a pestilence some years before, in faith and hope, prepared to live through the icy, ghastly winter.

What wonder that before three months had passed forty-four had died, rapidly followed by many more; or that, before the first year was out, the high windy hill on which I stood had become more covered with sad graves than there remained mourners below!

They built a square house on the top of a hill, on which they placed their little store of cannon, and which served for prayer-meetings, to which they were summoned by beat of drum ; and by slow degrees a little town sprang up, surrounded, for protection against Indian attack, by a rough stockade.

And a little while after the first spring and summer sunshine had come to cheer, a plumed Indian, to their surprise, suddenly stalked into their little town, saying, in English, “ Welcome, Englishmen ! ”

This friendly being, Samoset by name, told how he had learnt a little English from the settlers at Jamestown, and went on his way, leaving with them a “ brave ” called Squanto, who had once been kidnapped and carried to England, and consequently speaking English, was able to teach them many things, and to plant Indian corn, and to fertilize the ground as the Indians did by first burying fish.

Still they suffered great privations, and the winters often found them with little to eat and drink but shell-fish and water, before partaking of which their pastor, Brewster, would smilingly and cheerfully give “ grateful thanks that they were permitted to taste of the abundance of the seas, and of the treasures hidden in the sands ! ”

By slow degrees they were joined by some of the friends they had left at Leyden, and other emigrants, and prospered ; but not till, in 1624, the land had been parcelled out into small lots to each settler—the first basis of settlement having been “ all things in common,” and “ no individual property ; ” food and clothing from a common store, for which a daily task was exacted, given out daily to all alike.

This communistic system had also been tried at the

somewhat earlier Virginian settlement of Jamestown, and had, naturally, equally broken down and been discarded.

After a long pause on the top of the windy hill, I climbed down, sliding and slipping, to the snowy road below that led to the small and solitary granite rock on which the pilgrims first set foot on that bitter December day. It is reverently railed round, and shadowed and sheltered from the stormy elements by a sculptured granite canopy.

It is difficult to realize, for the sea has receded many hundred yards, and the stepping-stone of the landing of the "Pilgrim Fathers" stands now encompassed with fields, green in summer, and the sands of the sea seem quite far off.

Plymouth is now beautifully planted with fine trees and shady avenues, and in summer must be lovely; but I saw it as they did, ice-bound, and half buried in snow, and could try to realize, in some faint, far-off way, what they, the poor, sad pilgrims, must have felt, all unprotected in that bitter wintry icy blast, forlorn and alone in the wide, cold world!

Through a great avenue of double rows of wide-spreading beautiful trees I walked through the deep snow some distance to Pilgrim Hall, where are religiously kept many relics of the pilgrims, many pieces of their humble furniture, and many most interesting records. A model of the little "Mayflower," and the sword of Myles Standish, and large paintings, representing the sad "parting of the pilgrims" from the half of their numbers temporarily left behind at Leyden with their pastor, Robinson, most of whom would never meet again; and of the procession of the pilgrims, in their new home beyond the seas, to the joyful wedding of John Alden with Priscilla, the Puritan

maiden, the fair bride borne in triumph on a flower-crowned white ox; the story of which has been so melodiously told by the poet proud of his descent from the Puritan Pilgrims.

A fine portrait of Edward Winslow, first governor of the colony, one of the "Mayflower" band, and many other most interesting portraits and paintings, all shown to me by a lineal descendant of John Alden and Priscilla, who, as seems fitting, has charge of the Hall. It was pleasant to hear that Myles Standish was eventually consoled by another fair Puritan maiden for the loss of Priscilla, and that he and she are represented by many descendants at Plymouth.

After this I climbed, knee-deep in frozen snow, and over sheets of glistening ice, high up to where, on a commanding eminence, stands the grand monument to the "Pilgrim Fathers," a massive pedestal of granite 45 feet high, surrounded by stately marble statues of Freedom, Morality, Education, and Law; and high above the pedestal towers a colossal figure of Faith.

The view from the high terrace on which it stands is grand and extensive. Cape Cod Bay lies mapped out, with the mighty ocean beyond, and on shore the humble, never-to-be-forgotten "Rock." The icy wind had risen to a hurricane, and whirlwinds of snow enwreathed and almost veiled the monument. . . .

This was my last sight of Plymouth; this, as it were, little mustard seed, sown in grief and privation, struggle and sorrow, that in less than three hundred years has spread to such vast and gigantic results!

Well may the New Englanders pride themselves on this pure and noble beginning of their race! And much the Puritan element has done for their greatness.



MOCTEZUMA'S TREE, CHAPOLTEPEC. P. 138.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Boston—The Common—Newport, Rhode Island—Cliff Walk—
New York—The “Umbria”—Eastward ho !

I REACHED Boston, after my return from Plymouth, towards sunset, and drove straight to Trinity Church, and watched the scarlet and crimson sun-rays flashing and shining through the beautiful windows, the fine organ playing a grand and melodious symphony for some visitors ; and it was all a beautiful and harmonious ending to a day of abiding and deepest interest.

On my return to the hotel there was a transition to things frivolous and mundane, in the shape of a very smart and gorgeously dressed lady-interviewer, who had been waiting for me, on and off, all day ! So, of course, we had to have a talk, and she told me much that was interesting about Boston.

Next morning, February 14th, was perfectly lovely and slightly milder. At 7 a.m. I ran out for a delightful walk through the great length of the magnificent Commonwealth Avenue, 240 feet wide, shaded by double rows of beautiful trees, with many handsome residences, leading, straight as an arrow, to the famous “Common”—the object of passionate attachment to Bostonians—a lovely park, charmingly diversified with flower-beds, trees and fountains, monuments and statues, and delightful promenades, bordered by ornamental shrubs, through which I walked

Bancroft Library

to its furthest extremity, sloping up to the fine Beacon Hill, on which stands imposingly the huge State House, with wide portico and massive golden dome, from which a grand view commands the city and its labyrinth of waters, sea and river.

After this I just had time to drive quickly across to South Boston, to see the famous and most interesting Perkins Institute for the Blind, in which several cases of deaf-mutes also blind, have been treated with the greatest success. Many years of elaborate and patient education having produced in these sad cases—happily rare—extraordinarily brilliant results, the most remarkable being that of the long-ago, well-known Laura Bridgman.

There was not, unfortunately, time to see the famous Harvard University and other objects of interest at Cambridge—particularly the house so long inhabited by Longfellow, and in which he died in 1882—as I had to hurry back to catch the train to Newport, quitting the beautiful capital of Massachusetts, the cherished home of Prescott, Emerson, Bancroft, Ticknor, and so many other great names in poetry, science, general learning and philanthropy.

This city in its earlier days—unlike those of Maryland, Pennsylvania, and other States—was for a time the seat of rigid Calvinism, coercing to the utmost all in its power who opposed its stern and narrow dogmas; extending its despotism even into private and domestic life, regulating dress, forbidding mothers to kiss their children, or anyone to sit in Boston Common, or to walk in the streets except on the way to church on Sundays, or beer to be brewed on Saturdays lest it should “work” on the sabbath! All this seems to have been, naturally, followed by a complete reaction, and Boston is now as tolerant as the rest, and more latitudinarian and rationalistic than any—uni-

tarianism claiming incomparably the greater number of adherents.

After a short journey through undulating country, with occasional woods, I arrived at my destination, in brilliant sunshine, a cloudless deep-blue sky, the air sharp and icy, at about noon.

This was my last day but one in America, and a most enjoyable one.

Newport (Rhode Island), as everyone knows, is the Trouville of the States, the summer resort of the *fine fleur* of American "Society people," who have erected a series of the most charming villas, many of them gorgeous palaces, which they affectedly call "cottages," and where the elaborate bathing establishments and beaches necessitate innumerable changes of equally elaborate French toilettes and bathing costumes, and where the fashionable belles of the "Four Hundred" vie with each other as to who shall wear the extremest number of Parisian "confections" of the costliest and most ravishing description.

Of late years they have taken to initiating the idle day with a gallop of several miles—complexion and eyes being found to be brightened thereby—after which they bathe, lunch, drive, and drink tea and play games at each other's "cottages," re-assembling at gorgeous dinner parties; after which they dance all night, in wonderful ball dresses, decked and crowned with diamonds and every priceless jewel.

This I did not see, for it was the winter season, when all is shut up; but I walked, or rather climbed and slid along the Cliff Walk—one of the most charming in the world—although at the moment very difficult, for, where it was not deep snow, it was one sheet of ice, many parts almost impassable.

The Cliff Walk follows the interstices, first, of the little bay, then of the open ocean, looking down upon grand rocks over which to-day the shining blue waves rolled and dashed and broke into lovely fountains of spray. To the right of the walk lies the loveliest and most beautifully kept of green lawns, from which, here and there, the snow had melted, revealing the rich emerald-green mossy turf beneath, stretching along in soft and gentle undulations for three unbroken delightful miles along the jagged edge of the cliff. At a distance of about 200 or 300 yards from the walk, on the further side of the lovely green lawn, the whole way along, just far enough away from each other for perfect privacy, stand the beautiful and gorgeous "cottages"—many of them surrounded by charming gardens and shrubberies, without walls, or hedges, or railings, or obstruction of any kind, open to the admiring view of the humblest passer-by—all commanding exquisite sea views; many of them of fantastic but picturesque architecture, the very picture of comfort and sea-side ease; others almost too magnificent; for instance, Mrs. W. H. Vanderbilt's superb and immense white marble palace which, with its garden full of high trees, is carefully hidden from the gaze of the curious by a surrounding high white marble wall, the one exception to the general rule, and which must also greatly obstruct its own view of the sea, particularly as it stands slightly in a hollow; altogether I liked it much the least of them all despite its magnificence. It seemed to have none of the charmingly easy, friendly, and hospitable look of the others.

The two furthermost villas at what is called the Land's End, I thought the most enchanting of all, both as to situation and general charm; great chasms in the rock in front, through which the waves roar and rush, rising into

magnificent jets and fountains of spray, the lovely green lawn above, and the wild waves on every side but one, an enormous expanse of ocean gloriously grand.

When I reached this point the sun was dipping nearer and nearer to its sea bath, in one of the most gorgeously brilliant skies of rose, scarlet and gold I ever beheld.

At Bailey's Beach, a charming little sandy bay, with huge rows of bathing houses, the magnificent cottages come to an end, and the famous Ocean Drive begins. Here I took a carriage and drove several miles along this grand and most charming sea drive, but time failed to go the whole ten miles of its length, the long stretch of picturesque cliff and dancing wave gloriously beautiful in the wonderful after-glow, fascinating beyond words.

In every direction there are drives. I returned by Bellevue Avenue, delightful trees and gardens, giving the back view of the "cottages" and their carriage entrances. Then to Truro Park, an Italian look about its high round-topped pine trees, looming dark and magnificent against the still crimson sky, to the Round Tower, which some say was built by Norse vikings in the eleventh century, and others, less romantic, by a certain Governor Arnold in the seventeenth.

When the glow quite faded away and it became too dark to see anything more, I retreated to the shelter of the Ferry Hotel, the only one open in winter, conveniently close to the dock where, at 9 p.m., I had to embark for New York.

No doubt during its gay season Newport may look more alive, but I am glad to have seen it in all its natural loveliness on an ideally beautiful day, undistracted by the "madding crowd."

At 9 p.m. I left this fascinating sea-city, only so sorry

that the wintry season made it impossible to visit its fashionable rival, Bar Harbour, much further north, in Maine, all its hotels being closed till the spring, and the whole place and bay more or less ice-bound.

The little steamer was warm and comfortable, and for me the night passed pleasantly and rapidly, reading and writing, in the well-furnished saloon, and arranging my later notes and diaries, the records of my delightful tour in this wonderful land—so full of beauties and marvels of every kind; in which the English traveller invariably everywhere meets with the utmost cordiality and kindness, where one feels so completely at home, and which, with unimportant exception, I am convinced is most friendly, and at heart glad and proud of its kinship to the great Empire of the Isles beyond seas, and which one leaves with so much regret, and feelings of deep sympathy and admiration for the young kindred nation which, through peril and struggle in the beginning, and long after the beginning, has laboured so strenuously and achieved so much; and which—whatever may be the *revers de la médaille*—undoubtedly has in its hands a great and magnificent future.

At about 7 a.m. we disembarked at New York, and I “rode” for once in a quite empty Fifth Avenue stage, to the Netherlands Hotel.

There I breakfasted, then in a Fifth Avenue stage again for a farewell few hours at the Museum of Art; back again in the “stage,” then with a friend by appointment to see Mr. Cornelius Vanderbilt’s great white marble mansion close by, newly built, and the only really fine house in New York, handsomely furnished and admirably lighted on a new system of electric lighting, very effective, especially in the fine ball-room.

The entrance hall I thought particularly nice, entirely of white marble, with a very lovely staircase.

Among the not very numerous pictures, three exquisite Turners, and a most lovely Constable—green sunny downs and sea, with far distant exquisite line of light infinitely poetic.

There was not much besides, except very good portraits of the family, then absent in Europe, and no great quantity of works or objects of art. When we had seen enough, my cicerone took me to see several good collections in other private houses, and to the Woman's Art Club, where I only saw one really good painting, and that was by my friend Miss A'Becket.

Back to the hotel—in such freezing weather!—in time for supper, after which a final packing up; and next morning (February 16th), at 9 a.m., adieu to America, with deep regret; not, I trust, forever, but

“If forever, fare thee well!”

On board the “Umbria” (Cunard Line) the docks full of ice-floes, continually being broken up, every steamer and vessel rigged and coated in glittering ice and icicles, like so many phantom-ships.

The weather was fine, but bitterly cold. A kind friend had presented me with a basketful of the loveliest and sweetest roses, with which I decorated and made fragrant my “state-room” for the whole return voyage. At 11 a.m. we weighed anchor, and steamed past the colossal statue of Liberty, crunching through the ice, out of the harbour, with a fresh breeze past Sandy Hook, and on, till the New World gradually faded from our sight.

I liked the “Umbria” exceedingly, compact and most comfortable; a steady, first-rate sea-boat, the quality of

which was well tested, for, after a while, the stormy winds began to blow, and we had raging seas and wild gales, ending in a hurricane, during which we were battened down the greater part of a day and night.

For several days I found myself almost the sole occupant of the dining-saloon, nearly the whole of the unhappy passengers being confined to their "state-rooms."

I had a delightful cabin (or "state-room" as it is the *étiqute* to call it) on the saloon floor, in the airiest part of the ship, where, even when battened down, it was possible to breathe in ease and comfort, whilst the saloons were all unbearably hot and stifling.

We had no fogs, and as we came within distant sight of the green shores of Erin were signalled to the assistance of a ship apparently in distress, and after steaming eight knots out of our way, found that she was quite indignant at being supposed to require help, and only wanted a tug to tow her to Queenstown, which we amiably ordered for her on our arrival there, a little "off time" in consequence of this delay, and also the previous wild head-winds; but, a few hours, sooner or later, seemed very immaterial (at least to me), and, quite soon enough, we found ourselves hugging the shores of old England, passing the picturesque headlands of Wales; and, in calm, but bitterly cold and snowy weather (in mid Atlantic the temperature had greatly risen,) steamed into the Mersey, where the transferring tug awaited us, and at 7 p.m. on Saturday, February 23rd, were landed at the dock-side, after a cold and drizzling experience, standing on the wet deck of the tug whilst all the luggage from the "Umbria" was being trans-shipped.

First to the Custom House, which gave me little trouble, for after a mere pretence of being "examined," my boxes

were kindly "passed," and I soon found myself, with them, at the warm and comfortable London and North Western Hotel, where an excellent supper awaited the seafarers, and where I sat, over a delightful fire, till it was time to start by the midnight train for London, arriving at about 7 a.m. on Sunday morning, as the melancholy gas-lamps were "paling their ineffectual fires" in a mild sort of edition of the fierce "blizzard" of New York.

THE END.

ST. DUNSTAN'S HOUSE, FETTER LANE,
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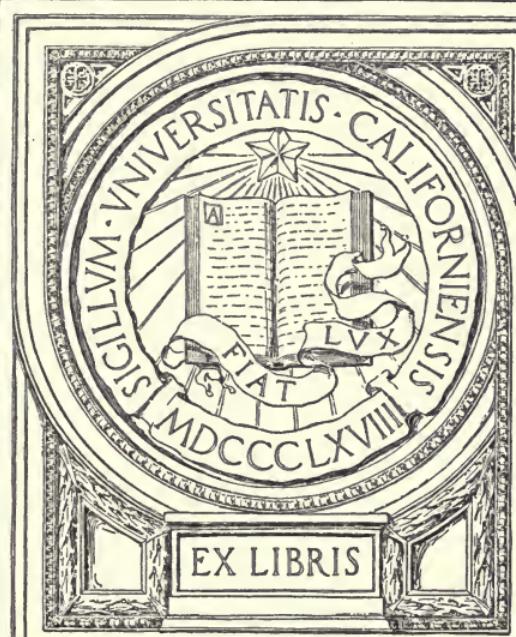
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